

BANDWAGON



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THIS MONTH'S COVER

There is nothing more traditional in the circus than the clowns, and the greatest clown appearing in the American circus today is Lou Jacobs.

Jacobs was born in Wesermunde, Germany in 1903. He joined the Ringling-Barnum Circus in 1924 and has appeared with the big show since.

When the 105th edition of the big show opened in Venice in January Lou as usual was featured with his midget auto and his rabbit hunting bit using his trained dog.

The Greatest Show on Earth has featured Jacobs on it's posters for 35 years and we are proud to honor this circus great.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Communications in the past six months have been few and far between. Either the membership is happy with the way things are; or they're so disillusioned they no longer bother to write. Kenneth B. Holmes, curator of the Barnum Museum, wrote in September thanking us for holding our convention in his hall. Certainly, his efforts added to the success of the meeting. The William P. Hall House Museum group is still hard at work, according to requests for information they have sent us. If any member wishes to aid in this preservation effort we can supply names and addresses of those to contact.

Member Edward C. Cridlebaugh has suggested buying certificates of deposit with our dues money since it comes to us more-or-less at one time and is spent over the year for postage and printing. This may be an idea with some merit.

No one has indicated to me their preference or suggestion for the place of the 1975 convention. In conference with Vice-President Parkinson I have decided to return again to the Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wisconsin. Specific dates will be announced in the March-April *Bandwagon*. The weekends of July 4 and 5 or August 1 and 2 are under consideration. Members opinions are invited.

The year 1974 was one of unusual loss to the Circus Historical Society. Five members, all of whom contributed to the recording of circus history either directly or as resource persons, died during the year. They were Carl (Red) Sonnenberg, John M. Staley, Robert D. Good, Sverre O. Braathen and Dr. H. H. Conley. We will miss them.

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THE RAY W. ROGERS CIRCUSES

PART V - BARNETT BROS. CIRCUS 1938-39

By Joseph T. Bradbury

The 1938 Season

Little information came out of York quarters by way of the trade publications during the early winter months of 1938 although it was reported that the improvements being made were going on as scheduled. When the work was completed Rogers would have a very fine physical layout to quarter his show each winter.

The Feb. 5, 1938, Billboard gave notice that things had stirred a bit in York with the following advertisement.

"Want for 1938 Season—Barnett Bros. Circus and Wallace Bros. Circus, York, S. C. Acts for big show doing two or more, girls for iron jaw, menage, ladders. Clowns, acrobatic preferred. Novelty act, man to work in riding act, wild west people for concert. For sideshow, acts, freaks, dancing girls. Electrician capable of handling 25 KW plant. Union musicians."

One of the first of the regular "Rogers' men" to sign for the new season was Ed Raymond as producing clown for the fifth consecutive season. Although there were a considerable number of staffers of previous years returning still there were a few newcomers, one of which was Bert Pettus, who would be in charge of the elephant herd which consisted of Junie, Della, Frieda, Alice, and Danny. Bill Woodcock signed on for 1938 to serve as a sideshow ticket seller rather than work in the elephant department but his wife, Babe, would work a single elephant act during the performance.

The Under the Marquee column of the March 12, 1938 Billboard remarked, "A man worth watching is Ray W. Rogers, manager of Wallace Bros. Circus. He is continually improving his show, steadily enlarging, is energetic and capable, knows show business from the ground up. He has been quiet this winter but is understood to be planning a great show." At this writing it was assumed that Wallace Bros. would again be the title used for Rogers' show during the regular season as was the case in 1937, however, plans were being made otherwise.

For some reason not clearly known to the author it was decided to return to the Barnett Bros. title which had been used from the 1928 thru 1936 seasons as well as for the small late fall and winter show in 1937. In all probability the Barnett title was used for routing



Photo No. 1 - One sheet upright litho for William Desmond used by Barnett Bros. in 1938. Color scheme has blue background, red circle, yellow and white lettering, white hat and yellow shirt. Circus World Museum (Baraboo, Wis.) Photo.

purposes. It was planned that for the first few weeks of the season the show would play in the same territory as the year before but after then rather than go into the midwest as it had done in 1937 the show would make an extensive tour of New England for the first time since 1935. The Barnett title would likely be stronger there than would a completely new moniker such as Wallace.

A somewhat unusual situation existed in 1938 in that O. C. Cox, the show's legal adjuster in 1937, was listed in all articles printed about the show, plus in the official roster, as lessor, operator, and manager of the Barnett Bros. Circus. Ray Rogers name was completely omitted from the roster. Walter Rogers when recently asked about this assured us that his father was in complete charge of the show and that in reality Cox served only as the legal adjuster. However, to satisfy a legal technicality Cox was named as lessor of the equipment from the Macon Circus Equipment Co. which was the

parent firm formed when George R. and Minter J. Wallace came in with fresh capital the previous winter. Possibly the Wallaces wanted it set up this way to protect the equipment from any possible attachments although the show was stable financially.

The Barnett title was placed on all vehicles which had not been changed over for the small late season show the previous fall. As mentioned before the names of Wallace and Barnett have the same number of letters in them so this change over of title on the trucks could be accomplished very easily. In some photos it can be seen that the former Wallace title had been painted out and the Barnett name added, indicating the entire vehicle had not been repainted. However, as always, the motor equipment was in the best of condition, well painted, neatly lettered, and made a great flash on the lot and highway.

W. R. Tumber, sideshow manager, placed an ad in the April 2, 1938 Billboard as follows, "Wanted—Single Oriental Dancers, young with good wardrobe, accordion player, novelty acts that are different."

Rogers again wanted a Hollywood movie cowboy as a feature of the show and secured the services of William Desmond, who although was not as well known generally as Hoot Gibson a year ago, was still considered to be a substantial drawing card. Desmond was a veteran actor who had been in scores of western films although he had passed his prime and the small fry wouldn't know him as well as someone such as Hoot Gibson, Ken Maynard, or Buck Jones who were currently heading the movie cowboy popularity polls, but their parents would remember him. Desmond proved to be very popular both with the show's audiences in 1938 and his fellow troupers. Walter Rogers remembers Desmond with affection and recalls him to be a very fine person. Desmond followed the same format set for movie personalities with the show. He made an appearance during the main performance and also worked in the wild west after-show, or concert.

The 1938 season, Rogers' 11th, began at York, S. C. April 7. The Billboard reported that the show had good crowds at the opening and noted the performance presented in three rings ran for one hour and 35 minutes. It stated the show had practically all new canvas and made an impressive appearance. The big top

was a 110 ft. round with three 40 ft. middles; menagerie, 90 with three 40's; sideshow 60 with three 40's and padroom 75 with one 40 and two 30's, according to the Billboard account, however it is highly unlikely the various middle pieces of the menagerie and sideshow were that size, probably no more than 30's, possibly 20's. But the report might be correct, Rogers had a loft full of old tentage and would often put it into use. The review article said that William Desmond, western screen star, was a featured attraction and his principal assistants were Mary McIvor and Chief Clarence Keyes, all of which also performed in the wild west aftershow with Texas Ted Lewis and a number of cowboys and cowgirls. Among other features of the opening performance mentioned were the Eno Hi Shek troupe of five; Flying Roginis, five people; Knight Family, wire act featuring Pat Knight; Amador Gutierrez, Mexican wire performer; DeRiskie family, head slides and balancing feats; and the Rogintosh troupe of riders featuring Howard Bryant. Additional notes said that the track specialities by a score of Barnett horses provided much comment and three waltz and rear horses performed at the same time. The Eno Family consisting of Dempe, Lena, Sue, Take, and George had outstanding acrobatic and risky numbers and the heel and toe catches presented by Tom Walsh and Pearl Harris were top notch. Tommy Burns was equestrian director and Ira Haynes, bandmaster. W. R. Tumer had a good sideshow lineup which included Precilla, noted "monkey girl" freak and Emmett, alligator boy. The account said praise was heard for the new costuming and horse and elephant trappings. The Flying Roginis performed on a new type of rigging in use for the first time this season. It remained standing throughout the performance. This somewhat brief report was followed by a more detailed review of a few weeks later.

Following pretty much the same early season routing out of York as for the past few seasons the show moved to Hickory, N. C., followed by Winston-Salem, then jumped across Virginia and into West Virginia with first date coming at Beckley, April 11.

Oak Hill, April 12, gave good business but other stands at Grantsville, Parkersburg, Clarksburg, and Grafton weren't too hot. The weather had been generally bad since the opening but it got downright vicious at Fairmont, W. Va. April 18, when a freak rain and windstorm came up and leveled the big top and padroom. The next day at Morgantown the show was able to patch up the damage and continue on the route okay.

Leaving Morgantown the show moved into Pennsylvania for stands at Connellsville, Somerset, Greensburg, Jeanette, Swissvale, and Aliquippa. While near Pittsburgh the show left the male elephant Danny, which was getting to be a

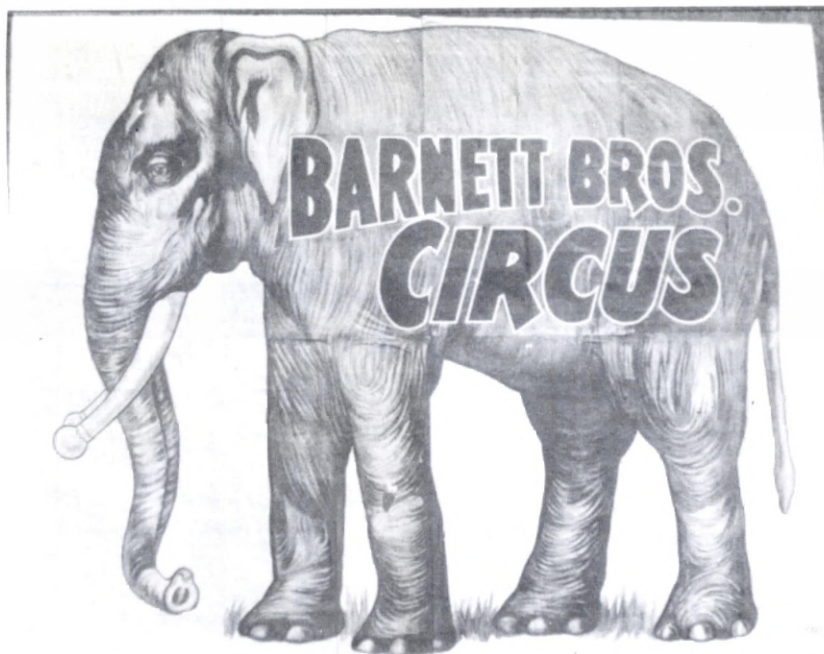


Photo No. 2 - Barnett Bros. billing stand in 1938 had simple design of a large elephant and the show's title. Pfening Collection.

very tough customer and difficult to handle, at the Highland Park Zoo. Rogers said the animal was leased to the zoo for the summer but it never returned to the Barnett show so no doubt the transfer was made permanent.

On April 27 Barnett Bros. played at East Liverpool, Ohio, which had become more or less an annual and usually very good early spring stand. While in the town the Billboard sent a reporter to interview Rogers and review the show. Rogers frankly admitted that business had been off and that he had experienced a very discouraging trek out of the south. Even with inclement weather, the blow-

down at Fairmont, and very spotty business which was considerably off the 1937 pace for the first month Rogers said he intended to carry on even if re-trenchment was necessary.

The report said the show was moving on more than 50 units, had 4 elephants, a camel, and 30 head of ring stock. It was noted there were 12 cages in the menagerie but this had to refer to individual dens as in all probability the show continued to carry around five truck cages, of one, two, or three den compartment size. Adult general admission prices were 40¢ with 25¢ for children and special school tickets available at all stands for 15¢ at matinees. Despite the continued rains in West Virginia the canvas made a good showing. Big top was said to seat 3,000.

The 1938 Barnett Bros. performance was listed as follows:

1. Tournament.
2. Smith Trio, bar act.

Photo No. 3 - Large billing stand for Barnett Bros. date at Ellsworth, Maine, Sat. July 30, 1938. Photo by Joe Brislin.





Photo No. 4 - Bert Pettus with Barnett Bros. elephants (left to right), Junie, Alice, and Della, season of 1938. Joe Rettinger Collection.

3. Special announcement, introducing William Desmond, Hollywood movie star.
4. Clown band.
5. Ring 1 - Head balancing.
Ring 2 - Trapeze, Frank Esperanza
Ring 3 - Trapeze
6. Single elephant acts in all three rings, worked by
Ring 1 - Babe Woodcock
Ring 2 - Norma Knight
Ring 3 - Winnie Newell
7. Foot Slide - Pat Knight
8. Barrell Kicking
Ring 1 - Enos Troupe
Ring 2 - Enos Troupe
Ring 3 - Tan Araki
9. Liberty act, presented by Texas Ted Lewis
10. Concert announcement, all principals on track
11. Tight wire act, Knight Troupe
12. Single elephant in novelty drunk act
13. Bing Harris, heel and toe act
14. Risley novelty act. Tan Araki and Enos in all rings.
15. Menage riders, Flo McIntosh, Dorothy Lewis, Midge Dever, Winnie Newell, Norma Knight, Babe Woodcock, and Mildred Harris.
16. Clown boxing gag in center ring.
17. Head slide, Frank DeRiskie.
18. Principal Riding Act, Rogintosh Troupe (3 women, man, clown)
19. Elephant act (4) worked in center ring by Tommy Burns.
20. Clown wedding gag.
21. Mexican wire act by Mona (Raymond) Gutierrez
22. Perch acts.
Ring 1 - DeRiskie
Ring 2 - Enos
23. Flying Hartzells in center ring.
First time for act, flying return, featuring John Hartzell, Helene Hartzell, Bing Harris, Searle Simmons, and Joe Doakes, comedian.

24. Exit march, Ira Haynes band.

The official 1938 Barnett staff was as follows: O. C. Cox, manager and operator; W. A. Rogers, asst. manager in charge of ticket wagon; Bill Tumber, sideshow manager; J. West, press with show; Ralph Cautin, inside tickets; Oscar Wiley, general agent; Keller Pressley, front door; Dorey Miller, contracting press agent (Note, not to be confused with Dorey R. Miller of Hugo, Okla.); Leonard Littman, story man; Ira Haynes, band director and mail agent; Shorty Gilson, boss canvasman; Jimmy Raggo, asst. boss canvasman; Deacon McIntosh, chief mechanic; Dave McIntosh, asst. mechanic; Eddie Brodie, chief electrician; Si Murray, with nine men, commissary; Bert Pettus, elephant boss; Tommy Burns, equestrian director; Mose Becker, boss butcher with 11 men; Peter Logan, menagerie stands; H. W. Morris, 24 hour man; Vestel Pruitt, car manager; Virgil Pruitt, boss billposter with five men.

The sideshow roster had W. R. (Bill) Tumber, manager, and Bill Woodcock, Ted Mulligan, and Pete Houey, ticket sellers. Attractions included Charles La Bird, inside lecturer and Punch and Judy; Thelma Bryant, Austrian bird act; Precilla, monkey girl; Emmett, alligator boy; Tex O'Conner, musician cowboy, and Jones Belle, leader of band and minstrels.

Other personnel rosters showed seven clowns, eight wild west performers, and twelve members of the band.

In a recent interview (1973) Helene Rogers Hartzell, daughter of Ray Rogers, told of the framing of the first flying return act on her father's show. Johnny Hartzell put the act together in the early weeks of 1938. Helene, although experienced in practically every other type of aerial act, had never been in a flying act before but she was worked into the act that made it's initial appearance on opening day at York on April 7. At times the act was known as the Flying Roginis, evidently playing on the Rogers name as had been true for other acts, notably the Rogintosh Riding act. In other seasons the act had a different stage name but in time became known only as The Flying Hartzells, which would continue for twenty years or

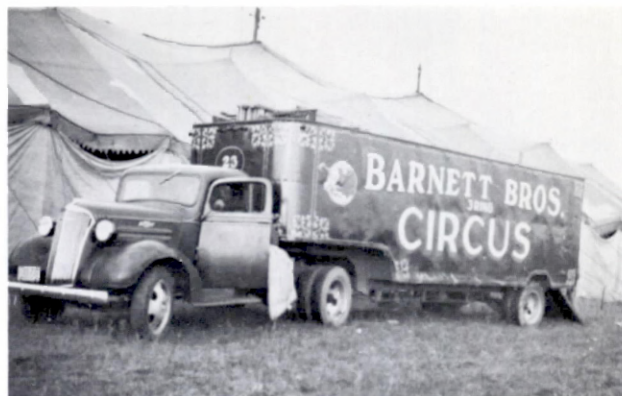


Photo No. 5 - Semi No. 23 on Barnett Bros. lot at Fulton, N. Y., May 28, 1938. Pfening Collection.

longer. Helene married Johnny Hartzell in the early spring of 1938 and the couple are still together in circus business at this writing (1974) as owners of the Wallace & Rogers Circus, a small motorized show operating primarily in the Pacific Northwest.

East Liverpool was the only Ohio stand played in 1938 as the show moved back into Pennsylvania at New Brighton and would remain in eastern territory for the remainder of the season. Eighteen stands in the Keystone State were played before it went into New York at Jamestown, May 19. While in Pennsylvania general counsel Paul Conway visited for several days. Business was very spotty. New Castle, Sharon, and Titusville were termed as good while Butler, Franklin, and Beaver Falls were rather poor. Practically every stand was below the take of 1937. During the final week in Pennsylvania the show suffered the loss of three troupers by death, the hardest blow dealt the Barnett show by the grim reaper since it was organized. Mose Becker, boss candy butcher for many years, died of heart trouble, next Frank Murray for years in charge of the lunch stand, died in a Beaver Falls hospital after a brief illness of pneumonia, and the third death was that of Joe Valenches, a cornet player in Ira Haynes band.

The first New York stand at Jamestown was a good one with two capacity houses in rainy weather. Other New York dates came at Dunkirk, North Tonawanda, Medina, Batavia, Geneva, Auburn, Oswego, Fulton, and Little Falls and then the show went into Massachusetts for a date at Adams, May 31. An extensive tour of New England was planned and the show would remain in the area for two full months. After additional Massachusetts dates at North Adams and Greenfield the show played Brattleboro, Vt. on June 3, Keene, N. H. June 4, then went back into Massachusetts at Gardner, June 6.

The July 2, 1938, Billboard said the Barnett show had made a swing down into the Providence, R. I. area and was the first show in so far in the season.

Newport, R. I., June 21 gave full houses at both the matinee and evening performances. Good press reviews followed. The Newport News said, "The courtesy of the management, performers, and workmen earned much favorable comment for the show playing the east for the first time." (Note, not the first time, of course, but show had not been in New England since 1935). William Desmond got a good review and was termed a "regular fellow" with the kids by giving dozens of them rides on his horse. Other feature acts mentioned included the Five Flying Roginis (Hartzells), the DeRiskie Troupe, Forest brothers, Johnny Hartzell, Knight wire act, Nelson Thomasson, Thomas Walsh Jr., Raymond Gutierrez, Knarr Trio, Bing Harris, and Capt. Thomas Burns and his performing elephants. The Newport Herald wrote, "The circus, not as large as some that have shown here, is filled with many entertaining and spectacular acts. Those who went to the lot and there were many hundreds, came away singing the praises of the clean and entertaining performance which they had witnessed."

In the same Billboard issue Circus Solly writing in Under the Marquee said, "Norma Rogers, talented daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ray W. Rogers, is doing some excellent work in the Barnett Bros. Circus performance this year, Solly hears. Versatile, attractive, and charming she appears in the wire act, one of the show's big features, works elephants, rides in menage, specialties, and otherwise works as an all round performer."

New Bedford, Mass. played the day before Newport had good business despite the city being contracted by Cole Bros. for July 4. Barnett also did good business in Pawtucket, R. I. on June 23.

In the meantime the country was now in the midst of a very sharp business recession which suddenness had dealt a staggering blow to the entire outdoor amusement industry as well as to the rest of the nation's economy. History would later record that the 1938 season was the worst circus season to date and subsequent years have never seen anything like it. Details of this disaster which just about killed circus business in

the United States have been covered in many articles recently and will not be repeated here with the exception to mention that by July 1 two of the five railroad circuses had already halted, the new Tim McCoy Wild West Show having folded early and a strike on Ringling-Barnum had shut that show down and sent it back to Sarasota quarters. Even the venerable Charlie Sparks had to close his Downie Bros. Circus due to bad business but he did reopen later in the year. Ringling-Barnum's sudden close left all of their contracted New England dates vacant so there was a grand scramble to get into the area by other shows. Both of the Jess Adkins-Zack Terrell railroad shows, Cole Bros. and Robbins Bros. were sent in. These plus Newton Bros., Eddy Bros. (Hunt), and World Bros. gave Barnett plenty of competition. All of them were out to scrounge for any spare quarters the natives might have. It was a rough go for all shows, Barnett included, and although Rogers and his show was one of the few circuses to survive the 1938 season, it wasn't an easy task. A few stands were good, many of them poor, while some of them were termed as "fair" such as Barnett's date at Falmouth, Mass. July 2, where illness kept William Desmond out of the program that day.

For some reason Barnett didn't play Connecticut but did make stands in all of the remaining New England states. The show secured a license to play Revere Beach, Mass. on Saturday and Sunday, July 9 and 10. This was the first Sunday license ever given to a circus in that state and the document later was added to the late Bill Woodcock's collection. After a string of 14 continuous days in Massachusetts the show was at Portsmouth, N. H. July 12, then went into Maine the next day at York Beach which was followed by stands at Saco, Old Orchard Beach, and Wolfboro. On July 18 it was back into New Hampshire for a single date at North Conway, and then to 31 additional stands in Maine beginning at Bridgton. Lawrence Brown wrote in the Billboard's Under the Marquee column that he saw Barnett Bros. at Saco. Old Orchard Beach, and Brunswick, reporting a good performance and fine equipment. He said that between shows at Old Orchard the elephants were

taken to the beach for a dip in the Atlantic.

The show played along the Canadian border including stands at Calais and Houlton. Robbins Bros. was in opposition at Calais as well as other stands. Competition was found at most places throughout the entire New England tour. Sometimes it was very stiff but personnel of the respective shows could still visit each other and the managements were generally friendly. It was just a case of survival for everyone. Rogers and O. C. Cox visited Newton Bros. when that show was at Warren, R. I. and usually called on other rival shows when they were close by.

To add to the already distressed times of the poor economic conditions, stiff competition, and generally slow business, the weatherman had to get into the act and drenched the area with rain for days. The August 20, 1938 Billboard mentioned that Barnett Bros. had suffered some bad breaks in the weather in New England but were doing fair business. The article mentioned there was plenty of rain and water at Bath, Maine, July 22. In moving off the lot it was necessary to construct a plank bridge for a distance of 90 yards. The show finally cleared the lot at daybreak and moved on to the next stand where the matinee was less than an hour late. Despite the difficulties with the elements two performances were given in Bath and Rogers termed it a winning date. At Calais it was necessary to use elephants on every piece of rolling stock. The lot was a sea of mud and the show was not off it until 5:30 a.m. but the matinee was given on time in Danforth. A photo was included with the Billboard article which pictured a Barnett elephant pushing a truck in knee deep water with the rear wheels completely submerged. The article also said clowns with Barnett Bros. included Johnny Knarr, Jack Rogers, Charles LaBird, Howard Bryant, Iza LaBird, Searle Simmons, and Ed Raymond.

Although it appears so far the Barnett performance had not been retrenched a report in the August 27, 1938 Billboard said that the show's wire act, including

Photo No. 6 - Barnett Bros. semi on lot, season of 1938. Pfening Collection.



Photo No. 7 - Light plant semi on Barnett Bros. lot, season of 1938. Pfening Collection.





Photo No. 8 - Barnett Bros. trucks on lot, season of 1938. Pfening Collection.

Norma Rogers, had left and joined the Mighty Haag Show which was moving from North Carolina into Georgia. No doubt Rogers wanting to cut back on his performance had the opportunity to rent the act to Mighty Haag and did so.

The final Barnett stand in Maine was at Auburn, August 23, after which the show played stands in Massachusetts at Lawrence, Lowell, and Holyoke, then took off on a 200 mile Sunday run so as to be at Morristown, N. J. for a date, August 29. Continuing south very rapidly the show played Easton and Norristown in Pennsylvania, which was followed by Havre de Grace, Md., Sept. 1, and Annapolis the next day. A 130 mile overnight move was made from Annapolis to Richmond, Va., Sept. 3, where it was hoped that city would be a good stand as it earlier in the year had given good houses to both Downie Bros. and Robbins Bros. Richmond did provide Barnett with a good take. The W. W. Workman Tent of the Circus Saints and Sinners of Richmond were hosts to 500 children from orphanages that day.

Following a day in Norfolk the show went into North Carolina at Elizabeth City with additional stands scheduled at Scotland Neck, Tarboro, Wilson, Dunn, Clinton, and Fairmont. South Carolina was entered September 14 at Dillon and for the next two months the show would play back and forth between the two Carolinas.

The Sept. 10, 1938 Billboard said that Norma Rogers, enroute from South Georgia after Mighty Haag had closed to join Robbins Bros. in Kentucky, stopped over in York, S. C. to visit her mother, Mrs. Ray W. Rogers, who evidently had left the Barnett show and returned to her home.

By mid-September the circus scene throughout the country was generally terrible. Both Cole Bros. and Hagenbeck-Wallace, large rail shows, had closed. Early September saw the largest motorized show, Tom Mix Circus, cease for all time. The list of circus failures so far in the year was lengthy. Both large and small shows had been swallowed up in the economic recession leaving showmen everywhere beaten and bewildered. Fortunately Ray Rogers, who had survived the great depression of the early 1930's, was still out playing thru the Carolinas which had become home territory to him. Both he and his show were well known and did enough business to make a normal season's route.

The Nov. 5, 1938 Billboard noted that Barnett was at Reidsville, N. C. on October 17 and had a good house at the matinee and packed them in at night. The performance was said to be well presented and was played by a small but good band. A final note said that Reids-

Photo No. 10 - Different view of Barnett Bros. lot at Irwin, Pa. May 7, 1938 pictures all major tents. New cook-house canvas is in left foreground and big top is at right. Pfening Collection.



Photo No. 9 - Barnett Bros. on lot at Irwin, Pa. May 7, 1938. Big top is at right. Pfening Collection.

ville was not considered a good circus town so the show was pleasantly surprised. The next issue of Billboard said the Barnett show had been playing in the Carolinas for several weeks to varying business. At times the show had been close to the York quarters and many troupers had visited friends in the town. Ed Raymond, producing clown, left to clown at a Cleveland department store for the tenth consecutive year.

The show did go into Virginia for one date at Franklin, October 7, but otherwise until closing day, it had played a total of 36 stands in North Carolina and 22 in South Carolina which indicates Rogers was counting on this territory to put him in the black for the season and hopefully get enough extra for the winter.

The final stand of the 1938 season came at Great Falls, S. C. on November 12. Barnett Bros. was one of the very few circuses which put in a full season that year. The Nov. 19, 1938 Billboard said the show during its 32 week tour had seen some good weeks but that business was off compared to former years. It was mentioned there had been little change in personnel during the season and no serious mishaps. The show went into its York quarters which were said to contain several newly constructed buildings along the Southern Railway tracks in the center of the town.



In the meantime there had been developments concerning the Macon Circus Equipment Company, the show's parent corporation. Paul M. Conway of Macon, Georgia was elected president while his law partner, Emil Hirsch, was named general counsel. The suit against Hoot Gibson which supposedly had been settled the previous summer in Ann Arbor, Mich. came to life again.

A new suit was filed in Superior Court, Fulton County, Atlanta, Ga. for \$50,000 for breach of contract and when Hoot Gibson arrived in that city where he was appearing with Robbins Bros. Circus on October 19 he was served with a court process with trial date expected to be in January 1939.

And so the year 1938 came to an end. The recession was still on although several shows including Al G. Barnes-Sells Floto with Ringling-Barnum New Features, a 50 car rail show, and Downie Bros. which reopened on August 15 noted a definite upturn in business in the southeast during the fall. Hopefully next year would be better.

The 1939 Season

The Billboard reported that Ray Rogers made a trip to Macon, Ga. in January 1939 for a conference with Paul Conway to discuss "legal business." No details were given but it is assumed the decision was made at that time to continue the same arrangement for the coming season in which the Macon Circus Equipment Co. would lease technically to O. C. Cox the necessary equipment to operate the show. Again, be reminded that Rogers was still in complete charge at all times. It was also decided to continue with the Barnett Bros. title for the 1939 season.

Strangely enough there was no further mention of the suit filed against Hoot Gibson for breach of contract. Whether or not it was ever brought to trial we don't know. The suit was to be heard in January 1939 in Atlanta and at the time I was a daily reader of the local newspapers but I can never recall seeing the first thing about it. In all probability the suit was dismissed and never came to trial but this of course is only an assumption.

The economic picture in the country was still very unsettled. War clouds in Europe loomed on the horizon but at the time the United States was strictly a neutral observer of the worsening situation. At this early stage there was no step up of any kind in defense preparations and industry continued at a very slow pace. In short, the economic recession was still on. In view of this Rogers decided to reduce the size of his show, especially cutting down on the number of vehicles used to transport it. Sizes of the major tents were also smaller than the previous year. One change which reduced the total number of trucks was the elimination of the 4 or 5 individual cages. A large semi was con-



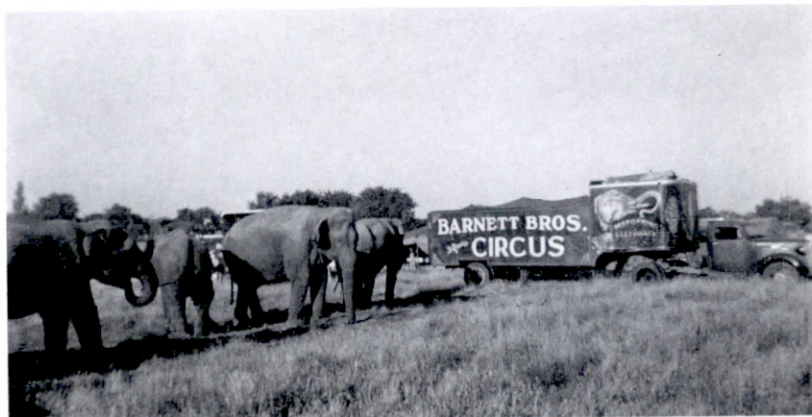
Photo No. 11 - Large 24 sheet billboard advertising Barnett Bros. stand at Alton, Ill. Tues. July 25, 1938. Joe Bradbury Collection.

structed with six den compartments which was sufficient to house all of the wild animal menagerie. Although some motorized circuses, notably Walter L. Main and Lewis Bros. had used semi cages since the very early 1930's this was the exception rather than the rule as most shows preferred single straight bed truck cages with one or two den compartments such as used by Downie Bros., Tom Mix, Barnett, etc.

The show still claimed a half dozen "cages" which by counting the individual den compartments was correct. With the four elephants, Junie, Della, Frieda, and Alice, one camel, and 30 head of performing horses the Barnett animal population was essentially the same as the year before.

The official 1939 staff was listed as follows: O. C. Cox, lessor and manager; Julian West, secretary-treasurer; Ray W. Rogers, general supt; W. R. Tumber, sideshow manager; Harry Swank, supt. front door and press agent; Dory E. Miller, general agent; Edward L. Conroy, in charge of advance; Harry Chipman, general press representative; William H.

Photo No. 12 - Barnett Bros. elephant herd (Junie, Della, Frieda, Alice) on lot at Decatur, Ill., July 10, 1939 Elephant semi is at right. Photo by Tom Parkinson.



Woodcock, story man and sideshow tickets; J. T. Burns, equestrian director; Ira Haynes, musical director; Ed Raymond, producing clown; Deacon McIntosh, chief mechanic, assisted by Dave McIntosh; Eddie Brodie, chief electrician; Si Murray in charge of cookhouse; A. J. Benjamin, concessions; Shorty Gilson, boss canvasman; Bert Pettus, supt. of elephants.

Canvas included the big top, 100 ft. round with three 40 ft. middle pieces; menagerie, 60 ft. with three 30's; sideshow 50 ft. with three 20's. The big top's seating capacity was said to be 3500 which included 750 grandstand chairs. At the beginning of the season it appears all of the canvas had seen prior use but was in good condition.

The March 25, 1939 Billboard said that Lee Powell, motion picture's Original Lone Ranger, would be a feature attraction with Barnett Bros. during the coming season. Rogers was continuing his policy of several years by having a Hollywood film personality appear in the big show and concert. The same issue said that more than 100 people were now at York quarters getting the show ready for the new season. Dennis Stevens had been signed to do tramp clowning on the show and earlier it had been announced Gertrude Redden was signed as a feature for the sideshow.

Even though the show's program was somewhat curtailed from what it was at the beginning of the previous season Rogers still had a very fine performance, fully on par with other motorized cir-



cuses, the number of which had been considerably reduced in 1939.

The 1939 Barnett Bros. program was as follows:

1. Grand Entry.
2. Horizontal bars (5 people)
3. Introduction of Lee Powell, the Original Lone Ranger.
4. Foot juggling, George, Sue, and Lena Eno, and Tan Arakis.
5. Clowns.
6. Single elephants worked by Jane Walters, Norma Rogers, and Babe Woodcock.
7. Foot slide by Pat Knight.
8. Eight horse liberty act worked by Texas Ted Lewis.
9. Concert announcement.
10. Knight Troupe, wire act.
11. Iron jaw, Jane Walters, Marion Clark.
12. Clown band.
13. Riding act with T. P. Lewis, Pat Knight, Boots Sallee, and Flo McIntosh.
14. John Harris' heel and toe catch.
15. Aerial trapeze, Maxine Walters.
16. Risley act by Eno Troupe.
17. Crazy clown walkaround.
18. Second concert announcement.
19. Elephant act, worked by Ursaline McIntosh.
20. Smith brothers, acrobatic "Bum" act, and "We We" comedy acrobats.
21. Aerial Perch, Kohl brothers and Eno Duo.
22. Flying return act, Creta brothers and Helene (Hartzell's)

Lee Powell and Texas Ted Lewis headed the wild west aftershow. Ira Hayes had a nine piece band and the show claimed 14 clowns.

The sideshow lineup included James Belle's Dixie Minstrels; Frank (Scottie) Keans, Scottish band; Hippodrome Han-

Photo No. 13 - Horse semi on Barnett Bros. lot, Decatur, Ill., July 10, 1939. Photo by Tom Parkinson.

lon, rolling globe; Tex O'Connor, iron tongue man; Jean King, butterfly girl; Frank Allen, giant; Gertrude Redden, impalement act; Charles LaBird, punch, ventriloquism, and magic; Hawaiian dancers (4).

Barnett Bros. opened the season at York, S. C. April 6. It was Rogers' 12th season for his show and the tenth opener in York. The next day the show moved to Hickory, N. C. followed by Winston-Salem and then went into Virginia for a stand at Danville, April 10. Roanoke was played April 11. Both Danville and Roanoke were also scheduled to see Downie Bros. in the near future. Downie placed "wait" ads in the newspapers at Roanoke for it's April 19 stand. Charles Sparks had sold his Downie show to William Moore and associates during the winter and rougher competition would be forthcoming from that show this season. This was the same William Moore who was Rogers' legal adjuster a few years ago and the one who had been credited with "stealing" Hoot Gibson and taking him to Hagenbeck-Wallace in 1937. There was no love between the Barnett and current owners of Downie Bros. so some stiff opposition could be expected when the two shows crossed paths.

The Billboard reported that Barnett played Covington, Va. April 12 and that the show has a very pleasing program with Ira Haynes leading a dandy nine piece all union band. Equipment is freshly painted and looks great. A final

Photo No. 14 - Cookhouse semi No. 65 and dining tent on lot at Decatur, Ill. July 10, 1939. Photo by Tom Parkinson.



note said that Tommy Burns was in his tenth year as equestrian director.

Harrisburg and Winchester completed the Virginia tour and then the show played a single stand in Maryland at Hagerstown, April 17, after which it went into Pennsylvania. First Keystone state stand came at Carlisle, followed by Hanover, then York. The York stand was under auspices of the Pleasant View Fire Co. and saw big crowds. Schools let out at 3 p.m. for the matinee. Mayor Harry B. Anstine presented Lee Powell a huge bunch of white roses in behalf of the City of York, Pa. to the City of York, S. C. where the show winters. Press agent Bill Tumber told the newspapers that the show's business had been on the increase lately although the weather at Harrisburg on April 21 had been too cold for a circus day. Harrisburg also saw competition from Downie Bros. billed in later as well as Ringling-Barnum scheduled for June 3. Features of the show singled out for praise in the local press in the area were the Eno Hi Shek Troupe of Orientals, Riding Lelands, Morello-Savilla Troupe (all stage names added by the show's press boys), Norma Rogers, and the Flying Hartzells.

The show was getting excellent publicity thanks to Harry Chipman, general press agent, and Edward L. Conroy, contracting press agent's efforts.

The Billboard said the show was first in at Lancaster, Pa. April 25 and that it has a nice line of paper and was heavily billing the personal appearance of the Lone Ranger. The previous stand at Columbia, Pa. gave excellent business and the show was visited by Paul Conway. There was a fair afternoon but good night house at Lancaster after a short move of 11 miles from Columbia.

Barnett next played Reading followed by West Chester, April 27, where it was the first circus of the season. Bethlehem, April 29, was the best Saturday date so far in the season with two straw houses. The show was in Pennsylvania almost a full month. During that time several changes were made in routing, including the cancellation of Wilkes-Barre. On May 9 the show jumped into New York to play Olean where the weather was bad for the matinee but cleared by night and there was a good attendance. It was at Jamestown the next day then came back into Pennsylvania at Warren on May 11. Two additional stands at Titusville and New Castle completed the tour of the state. Reports said that a number of stands in western Pennsylvania which had been originally contracted were cancelled. One of these was Erie which had been billed for May 15 but Russell Bros. came in ahead on May 7 so Barnett cancelled out. The Erie date hadn't been originally planned but when it appeared both Ringling-Barnum and Cole Bros., the nation's two surviving railroad shows, would pass up the city Barnett booked the stand. However, after the Russell move Rogers

figured that show would take out all of the surplus change which was still very scarce in the native's pockets in those parts. Canton, Ohio was set for the 15th and this put the advance somewhat behind but with some quick work by the boys it was soon back to ten days ahead. Rogers told The Billboard that the final week in Pennsylvania had been spotty due to the coal strike, however the show had scored a couple of big weeks in the state. Observers noted there were fewer people with the Barnett show this year but that it was still maintaining the same high standard of programming.

Canton, Ohio gave a fair matinee and three-fourths house at night. Press agent, Harry Chipman, was doing an outstanding job for the show getting good stories both at Canton and Massillon, Ohio, the next day. Other Ohio stands came at Barberton, Lorain, Sandusky, and Fostoria, then the show went into Indiana with first date being at Fort Wayne on May 22.

Circuses were all over the area. In Canton on Sunday before show date all kinds of truck shows went thru town on that day. Lewis Bros. moving from Ashland to Salem passed early in the morning and later Barnett arrived in from Newcastle, Pa. for it's stand the next day, and later Floyd King's Hit Parade came thru enroute from New Philadelphia to Alliance. Barnett had a fair day at Massillon, Ohio which was only eight miles from Canton. A large number of CFA's were on the lot that day.

The Billboard commenting on the show's move into the mid-west said it would remain in the area for sometime and that equipment would be added in two weeks. It also said that W. R. Tumber's sideshow had been doing well so far.

In the meantime Rogers had run into serious legal difficulties. A suit was filed by Lone Ranger Inc., owner of a currently popular radio serial, for \$250,000 damages in federal court at Lewisburg, Pa. Defendants named were Lee Powell and the Macon Circus Equipment Co., a Georgia corporation from which Barnett Bros. Circus leases it's equipment. Both were charged with conspiring to deceive and mislead the general public in the advertising and promotion of Lee Powell as the Lone Ranger, ownership and copyright of which was claimed by Lone Ranger, Inc. The complicated turn of events may be explained as follows. Powell was one of five actors who portrayed The Lone Ranger in the first motion picture serial produced by Republic Pictures. Subsequently, a second Lone Ranger serial went into production in which Powell did not appear. The Lone Ranger radio program was currently in existence and very popular. Rights to both the movie and radio were held by Lone Ranger, Inc. The suit in addition to seeking damages asked for an injunction against Powell and the Macon Circus



Photo No. 15 - Group of trucks on Barnett Bros. lot at Decatur, Ill. July 10, 1939. Ticket trailer is in center. Photo by Tom Parkinson.

Equipment Co.'s further use of the name of Lone Ranger. Barnett's newspaper and radio advertising had publicized Powell as the "Original Lone Ranger" and autographed souvenir photos of Powell in costume were given to kiddies attending the matinees and aftershow concerts.

Attorneys for Powell answered the suit by contending that in no way had he advertised himself as being connected with the current Lone Ranger radio program. Shortly after the suit was filed Barnett Bros. began posting upright half sheets and dates which read, "Notice, Lee Powell, appearing in person with Barnett Bros. Circus is the original Lone Ranger who played the role of Allen King in the movie serial and is not connected with the radio program of Lone Ranger Inc. Detroit, Mich." One date sheet also read, "Warning, Barnett Bros. Circus will pay a \$5000 reward to any person or persons who can prove Lee Powell starring on the circus program is not the original Lone Ranger of talking pictures." Another read, "Lee Powell (in person) is the original Lone Ranger of talking pictures fame."

A series of delays set in with motions and counter motions filed and as a result the suit would be in limbo for a couple of years without any definite ruling being made by the court.

Barnett at South Bend, Ind. May 24 on a new lot at Greenlawn and Mishawaka Avenues did capacity at night and

Photo No. 16 - Barnett Bros. setting up on lot at Decatur, Ill., July 10, 1939. Photo by Tom Parkinson.



also had a big matinee. It was reported that Lester and Babe Hutchinson were handling the advertising banners on the show.

Several days in the Chicago suburbs followed. Fair business came at Indiana Harbor, Gary, and Blue Island, Ill. A Billboard representative caught the show at Waukegan, Ill. May 31 and reported excellent business, a very good performance, and fine looking equipment. He said business had been pretty good of late. At Park Ridge, Ill. June 3, a large number of CFA's visited and witnessed the raising for the first time of a brand new big top purchased from the U. S. Tent and Awning Co. It was a 110 ft. round with three 40 ft. middles. Also a new 70 ft. sideshow top (with probably 20 ft. middles) went up.

Elmwood Park, June 4, was the final Illinois stand and then the show played Michigan City, Ind. and moved into Michigan at Kalamazoo. The advance had rushed in to bill Kalamazoo only five days ahead of the scheduled appearance, however the move put Barnett into the town two days before Parker & Watts Circus. Rogers didn't choose to take on any more opposition towns such as Kalamazoo but found other shows swarming all over Michigan. In addition to Parker & Watts, Lewis Bros., Cole Bros. and Floyd King's Hit Parade were due in. At Kalamazoo Harry Chipman made a fine hook up with a baking company which printed up 2000 kids tickets which were sold at a special price and also gave the show a plug on it's radio station. While in the city reports had it that the show had presented a young lion cub to Mayor and Mrs. Arthur L. Blakeslee, presumably for the local zoo.

The show played an additional 17 stands in Michigan during which time

AMERICA'S EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

The Famous BARNETT BROS. BIG 3 RING CIRCUS

With **LEE POWELL**
THE ORIGINAL TALKING
LONE RANGER
MOTION PICTURE
IN PERSON

REDUCED PRICES THIS DAY AND DATE ONLY

CHILDREN **25¢**
ADULTS **40¢**

EXTRA ADDED FEATURE
THE SMALLEST MAN IN ALL THE WORLD
BARON NOWAK
LIVING SIZE STANDS 19 IN.
WEIGHS 17 LBS.
18 YRS. OLD

THE GREAT ENDORSHARK TROUPE
General General Endorshark Troupe
General General Endorshark Troupe

RIDING NICKALONIANS
General General Endorshark Troupe

CAPTAIN BURNS
With Three Mighty Men of
Military Elephants

FLYING HARTZELLS
General General Endorshark Troupe

25 FUNKY CLONES
CHAMPIONS OF JOY

25 ROGENOS
PEERLESS GROUP
OF ADVENTURERS

250 ARENOS STARS
AT THE SMALLEST PRICES IN

BIG SHOW HISTORY
WILL POSITIVELY EXHIBIT AT

MONROE SATURDAY, JUNE 24
O'LONE'S FIELD

Both sides of Barnett Bros. herald for stand at Monroe, Mich. Sat. June 24, 1939.

little or no information was published in the trade publications. Monroe, June 24, was the final Michigan date and next the show went into Indiana at Auburn which was followed by Warsaw, Wabash, Muncie, Kokomo, and Elwood.

Ernest Mitchell of Tipton, Ind. wrote in the Under the Marquee column of the Billboard, "Barnett Bros. Circus came to Elwood last Saturday but did not open at night—no business. The show left and took the road thru Tipton and the state police go after it for bad lights and made it tough. I tried to get matters adjusted as I knew the officials here but could not get by the state police. A warning to truck shows playing Indiana—see that your drivers have chauffeur's licenses—not just driver's licenses. Have flares, flags, and clearance lights on trucks, also tail lights."

About this time, certainly in time to advertise the July 4 date at Logansport, Rogers secured the services of Richard Nowak, son of Mrs. Emma Nowak, an 18 year old midget, to become a feature attraction of the aftershow concert. He

was billed as Baron Nowak, the "smallest man on earth," and was claimed to be 19 inches high and weighing 17 lbs. Although Lee Powell continued to get top billing the show increasingly stepped up the publicity for Baron Nowak and in time the youngster became perhaps the best known circus midget of that period.

Almost a full week of additional Indiana stands came next with the final date at Hammond, July 7. The show then went into Illinois at Kankakee and would remain in the state for nine consecutive stands.

Tom Parkinson caught the show at his home town of Decatur, Ill. July 10, and said there was a half house in the afternoon and three-fourths at night. Tom recalls admission prices that day were 25¢ to all in the afternoon and 25¢ and 40¢ at night.

After Decatur the show played Lincoln, Bloomington, Peoria, Pekin, Galesburg, and was at Moline, Ill. on July 17 when Ed Hiler joined as contracting agent. Barnett then moved into Iowa for dates at Davenport, Muscatine, Burlington, and Keokuk before returning to Illinois July 22 at Macomb. Following a stand at Springfield the show played Alton where there was a capacity crowd

BARNETT BROS. CIRCUS EXCLUSIVELY PRESENTS

A HUMAN MARVEL!
HE SINGS, DANCES
and PERFORMS
TWICE DAILY

BARON RICHARD NOWAK
FIRST TRIUMPHAL
AMERICAN TOUR
IN PERSON

Acclaimed
BY PRESS
and
PUBLIC
—
ACTUALLY
SMALLER
—
THAN THE
FAMOUS
TOM THUMB!

A LIVING
BREATHING,
DOLL!

WEIGHT
17 LBS.
HEIGHT
19 IN.
AGE
18 YRS.

**THE SMALLEST MAN
LIVING ON EARTH!**



at night. That day Lee Powell and two elephants made an appearance at the local Sears store.

From July 26-29 the show was in St. Louis on the Grand and Laclede lot and was said to have been one of the first motorized shows to play that city. It was at Columbia, July 31, and while enroute there early in the morning one of the trucks was crowded off the highway and overturned. The elephant, Junie, was pressed into service to right the truck and push it back onto the road. Fortunately no serious damage was done. Barnett was the first circus into Moberly, Mo. of the season and the natives were in high praise of it.

The August 12, 1939 Billboard said that Reno McCree was now acting as equestrian director of Barnett Bros. performance while Tommy Burns was in a Cincinnati hospital having his legs treated. McCree's wife, Margie, was in the performance doing a contortion act. A further note said that an air calliope had been added to the Barnett band.

Lexington, August 4, was the final Missouri stand and then the show headed into Kansas at Leavenworth. Stands at Topeka, Manhattan, Junction City, Salina, Hutchinson, Newton and two days in Wichita followed. Moving south Barnett next dipped into Oklahoma at Ponca City, August 15, then played Enid, El Reno, and another two day stand at Oklahoma City. As can be seen the show had been playing some large cities for the past few weeks and had scheduled multi date stands for the population centers. A Billboard correspondent caught the show at Oklahoma City, August 18-19, and wrote that the first night show was a turnaway and it was capacity the following evening. Both matinees were also well attended. The report said that Ira Haynes had 10 men in his band, the show had four elephants, the sideshow ten platform acts, and Lee Powell gave a pleasing aftershow using 20 people. Baron Richard Nowak made the local papers when a four column full length picture of him was run.

After Oklahoma City came five more single dates then the show was at Tulsa two days, August 26-27. Bette Leonard wrote The Billboard that the Saturday matinee in Tulsa was half full but other performances drew better. She also said that at Wichita, Kan. on August 13-14 Barnett's business was very bad as a local national baseball tournament was going on which drew 10-12 thousand each night.

Additional Oklahoma stands came at Bartlesville, Vinita, and Miami, and then the show went into Missouri for a date at Joplin, August 31. After Carthage the show moved to Arkansas and played Rogers on September 2. While Sundaying on the lot the next day at Ft. Smith, Ark. the news came that France and England had declared war on Germany and that World War II was now a reality. Several shows, including Cole Bros. said



Photo No. 17 - Barnett Bros. No. 59, cage semi, on lot at Decatur, Ill., July 10, 1939. Photo by Tom Parkinson.

that immediately after the war began in Europe their business dropped decidedly. We have no information as to the effect on the Barnett ticket wagon as news of the show was practically non-existent for the next few weeks. Two full weeks were played in Arkansas and then the show took off on a long Saturday and Sunday jump across Mississippi so as to be at Florence, Ala. in time for its scheduled Sept. 18 stand. Other Alabama stands came at Decatur, Cullman, Bessemer, Montgomery, and Lanett and then the show jumped across Georgia on a Sunday and went to Greenwood, S. C. where it exhibited on September 25.

While near York the show was cut down somewhat and several trucks were sent to quarters. The Oct. 14, 1939 Billboard said the show played Mooresville, N. C. September 30 to a light afternoon crowd but fair sized night house. The reporter noted the show had recently been reduced in size but said it was still a plenty good show but was now minus the aerial acts. Reno McCree was equestrian director and William Tumber, side-show manager, was doing the big show's announcing plus acting as press agent back with the show. Texas Ted Lewis was presenting the aftershow which had Baron Nowak as an added attraction. No mention was made of Lee Powell as presumably he left when the cut back was made a few days earlier. Both Downie Bros. and Russell Bros. had played North Carolina but none had done much business. Circus business was pretty depressed in most areas in the fall of 1939, down somewhat from the spring and summer take.

Barnett continued throughout the month of October playing in the two Carolinas where the territory was familiar. On October 28 "Irish" Turnie, a ticket seller with the show from York, was seriously injured when he was cut by Leroy Cole, a local, where the show was playing following a dispute. County officials arrested the assailant and an-

"Newspaper ad for Barnett Bros. stand at Logansport, Ind. July 4, 1939. Circus Memories (Fryeburg, Maine) Collection."



Photo No. 18 - Barnett Bros. office and ticket semi on lot at Decatur, Ill. July 10, 1939. Photo by Tom Parkinson.

nounced that some local boys were in an argument with one of the elephant department attaches after being asked to keep their dogs away from the animals. Later Tunie was mistaken by one of the locals for the elephant man and attacked him with a knife. This was the only event of this nature during the entire season on the show. Things of this nature were never common on the Barnett show.

The final stand of the 1939 season came at Summerton, S. C. November 4. Barnett was one of the last shows to close. Although business had been better than the previous year the show had made no great profits but had at least kept going and had been able to make some improvements, acquire new canvas, and maintain the quality of the performance.

No action had been taken in the suit against Lee Powell and the show as yet except the court had failed to issue any kind of injunction prohibiting Powell from continuing as is. Attorneys for the defendants had succeeded in delaying further action and none would be forthcoming for another year.

Shortly after Barnett returned to York quarters, Ed Hiler, general agent, succeeded in arranging for the Barnett elephants and camel to appear in Christmas parades in Spartanburg, Greer, Laurena, Clinton, and Union, S. C. Bill Woodcock with two assistants were in charge of the animals for the parades. Hiler had done a good job and Rogers engaged him for the 1940 season.

Rogers made a deal with Orrin Davenport to provide a wild west type aftershow for the latter's indoor circus dates, the first to be the Canton, Ohio Shrine Circus. Appearing in the aftershow was Baron Nowak, Lee Powell, and about 12-15 head of wild west stock plus several personnel, everything of what it took to provide a complete wild west show.

As 1939 came to a close Rogers told The Billboard that his plans for the 1940 season were indefinite but he intimated his show would be about the same size as it was in 1937 when he had used the Wallace Bros. title.

Logansport

ONE DAY ONLY
2 p. m. and 8 p. m.

TUES. JULY.... 4

FAIR GROUNDS



BARNETT BROS.

BIG 3 RING

CIRCUS

with
LEE POWELL
The Original Talking Picture
LONE RANGER
IN PERSON

EXTRA ADDED FEATURE
BARON NOWAK

AGE 18 YRS: WEIGHS 17 LB.
HEIGHT 19 IN.
—Smallest Man On Earth—

SPECIAL HOLIDAY PRICES

CHILDREN 25c

ADULTS 40c

Reserved Seats Circus Day At
WALGREENS, 9:30 a. m. until 12:30 Noon.

SETTING STRAIGHT THE HALL CIRCUS TITLES

By Bob Parkinson

There are a few names which appear in circus titles in such profusion and confusion that sooner or later the most ardent circus historian may come to grief in his efforts to unravel them. The names Howes and Hall are examples of this confusion from profusion. The writer, in his efforts over the years to file and catalogue circus materials at the Circus World Museum Library, found the name Hall to be the most defeating of all. He confesses to adopting a "manana" attitude towards everything bearing the Hall name, finding postponing the problem the more expedient convenience. Eventually, however, "manana" came and reality had to be faced. An effort was undertaken to research and unravel the name Hall in the circus business, resulting in a presentation at the 1974 CHS Convention at Bridgeport; and, with a few refinements, this article.

We will confine ourselves in this article, only to those circus titles in which the name Hall directly appears. There are other instances in which the name Hall does not appear in the corporate title of circuses, but in which owners or managers named Hall are involved, to which we here will give but passing mention. Our purpose here is singular: to provide a guide by which the circus historian or collector, upon en-

This is a newspaper ad for the Charles Hall's Circus of 1894, operated by Charles Hall, one of the two sons of George Hall, Sr. who had circuses of their own. Circus World Museum Collection.

Coming! Coming!



Chas. Hall's
New Colossal Shows
will exhibit at
Sheboygan
...Falls...
TUESDAY, JULY 24.

50 FAMOUS PERFORMERS 50 NEW ACTS.
NEW FEATURES.
Don't forget the Grand Free street Parade.
Two Performances Daily.
Admission 15 and 25 cents.

countering a circus item bearing the name Hall, may have some assistance in determining the date and correct identity of the circus involved. Accompanying this report is a chart listing the Hall circuses that have been identified, the word-combinations of their titles by which they may be recognized, the seasons they were on tour and the names of their proprietors. This report will offer some explanations, elaboration and side-lights to the raw facts catalogued in this listing.

As a starter, to explain the confusion, one must understand that there have been two George W. Halls, two Frank Halls, two Charles Halls, plus J. J. Hall, Fred Hall, R. V. Hall, F. W. Hall, William P. Hall and some unidentified Halls, all of whom have propertored circuses bearing their names. Several of these Halls were related, and operated different circuses simultaneously under near dead-ringer titles. From 1881 through 1920 (possibly excepting 1887) every season saw the Hall name on circus billing. Usually, there were more than two Hall shows enroute and in 1895, 1903 and 1905 there were four. The record was 1902 when there were five circuses using the name Hall.

Colonel George Washington Hall, Sr. (1836-1918) of Evansville, Wisconsin, is the beginning of the story of the proliferation of the Hall name in circuses. He was also known by the nick-name "Popcorn" George Hall, however, in later years some confusion resulted from the erroneous application of the "Popcorn" nick-name to his son, George W. Hall Jr. A good account of the career of George W. Hall Sr. will be found in an article by Clarence Beerntsen in the January-February 1970 issue of the Bandwagon. George W. Hall Sr. operated circuses continuously for 21 years, his last season with a show on the road being 1902. Lack of confirming evidence leaves question marks over the seasons of 1887 and 1901, but neither is it proven that he was not on the road those years. He may have returned briefly to the road in 1910. His shows moved by railroad on variously 2 to 15 cars.

It was in 1881 that George W. Hall Sr. first became proprietor of his own circus, however, we do not know the precise title of his first venture. In 1883, there was a circus on tour under the title Hall's Great Western Circus. This may have been George W. Hall Senior's show, but we cannot confirm this as a fact. In 1884 the title of his show was

Col. G. W. Hall's Big United States & Great Eastern Circus. George W. De Haven, of Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, was associated with that 1884 show, as evidenced by the use of the "Big United States & Great Eastern" title, which DeHaven had used with other circus enterprises in earlier years. In fact, in July of 1885, George DeHaven and Silas Dutton, a Chicago livery operator, bought out Col. George Hall's interest in the show, the transaction taking place while the show was in the Chicago area. For the balance of that 1885 season, Col. Hall contented himself with the operation of the side show. DeHaven's control of the show was short-lived, however, because Col. George Hall, Sr. was back at the helm of the show in 1886. There are reports that this 1885 show went to the West Indies. If that was the case, it must have been late in the season, as it was definitely in the U.S.A. in the summer.

A New York Clipper reference reports a show titled Hall & Lehman's Circus in the same Chicago area in the same July of 1885. One suspects that Hall & Lehman's Circus was this same

An advertisement for G. W. Hall Jr's Circus of 1894, the second season that George Junior had his own show on the road. Circus World Museum Collection.

G. W. HALL JR'S
— GREAT —
TRAINED ANIMAL SHOWS
MUSEUM AND MENAGERIE



EVANSVILLE - AFTERNOON AND EVENING
Saturday, May 4th.

Having purchased the Elephants, Camels and Menagerie department, of Col. Geo. W. Hall, also the only living Gorilla in America, 3 performing Elephants Queen, Empress and Palm in the Menagerie department, 16 cages of wild animals, 4 camels, Elephant headed and sacred cow Also a first class ring performance. Admission to the entire show will be 25 cents. Children under 9 years, 15 cents.

show while under the brief control of DeHaven and Dutton; however, this is unconfirmed and how the name Lehman got into the picture is left dangling. Could Lehman be a mis-print or misquote of the name DeHaven? If so, it will not be the only instance in which this report will identify a type-setter's error as the cause of a phantom circus title.

In 1888 and 1889 Col. George Hall Sr. and a man named Bingley were partners in the operation of Col. G. W. Hall's Circus & Bingley's Menagerie. It is interesting to note that during this time, the New York Clipper made several references to Hall & Quigley's Circus and to Hall & Ringling's Circus. The Ringling brothers of Baraboo, Wisconsin, felt compelled to write a letter to the Clipper stating that they had nothing to do with the Hall show, and that the Clipper was totally in error in tying the Ringling name to that of Hall. It is quite evident in these instances, that the names Quigley and Ringling were hitched to Hall in the Clipper in error, a result of misreading a correspondent's poor writing of the correct name, Bingley.

In 1889 (August), George Hall Sr. formed a partnership with Sam McFlinn which continued through the season of 1891. It was known as McFlinn & Hall's Circus. The name McFlinn appears under various spellings. Curiously, (shades of Cole-Beatty and Beatty-Cole) in 1896 and 1897, the title reappears on George Hall Senior's circus, with the name Hall coming first, Hall & McFlinn's Circus.

Examples of the proliferation of the Hall name, are these two heralds for Hall & Sample's United Wagon Shows (F. W. Hall) and Hall's Big Tent Shows (R.V. Hall). Circus World Museum Collection.

A RESUME OF HALL CIRCUS TITLES & PROPRIETORS

| | | |
|------|---|---|
| 1837 | Hall's Circus & Menagerie | (J. J. Hall) |
| 1838 | Hall's Circus & Menagerie | (J. J. Hall) (Toured West Indies; title not confirmed) |
| 1839 | Hall, Nathans & Tufts N.Y. Circus & Arena Co. | (J. J. Hall, John Nathans & Tufts) |
| 1840 | Hall, Nathans & Tufts N.Y. Circus & Arena Co. | (J. J. Hall, John Nathans & Tufts) |
| 1881 | Title unknown | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1882 | Title unknown | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1883 | Hall's Great Western Show | (Proprietor undetermined; maybe Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1884 | Col. G.W. Hall's Big United States & Great Eastern Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1885 | Col. G.W. Hall's Big United States & Great Eastern Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr. & Geo. DeHaven) |
| 1885 | Hall & Lehman's Circus | (Prop. undetermined; maybe should be Hall & DeHaven's Circus) |
| 1886 | Col. G.W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1887 | No confirming record | |
| 1888 | Col. G.W. Hall's Circus & Bingley's Menagerie | (Geo. W. Hall Sr. & Bingley) |
| 1889 | Col. G.W. Hall's Circus & Bingley's Menagerie | (Geo. W. Hall Sr. & Bingley) |
| 1889 | McFlinn & Hall's Circus (opened 8/31/89) | (Geo. W. Hall Sr. & Sam McFlinn) |
| 1890 | McFlinn & Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr. & Sam McFlinn) |
| 1891 | McFlinn & Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr. & Sam McFlinn) |
| 1891 | Chas. Hall's Circus | (Charles S. Hall) |
| 1892 | Hall & Macart | (Probably in Geo. Hall family, but unconfirmed) |
| 1892 | Col. G.W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1892 | Chas. Hall's Circus | (Charles S. Hall) |
| 1893 | Col. G.W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1893 | Chas. Hall's Circus | (Charles S. Hall) |
| 1894 | Col. G.W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1894 | Chas. Hall's Circus | (Charles S. Hall) |
| 1894 | G.W. Hall Jr's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1895 | Col. G.W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1895 | Hall & Showers' Circus | (Charles S. Hall & Andy Showers) |
| 1895 | G.W. Hall Jr's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1895 | Frank Hall's Royal English Circus et al | (Frank Hall, not Frank E. Hall) (Chicago indoor) |
| 1896 | Hall & McFlinn's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1896 | Geo. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1897 | Hall & McFlinn's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1897 | Geo. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1898 | Col. G.W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1898 | Geo. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1899 | Col. Geo. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1899 | Geo. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1900 | Col. G.W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1900 | Geo. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1900 | Hall, Long & Eldon Circus | (Fred C. Hall, F. Long, H. Eldon) |
| 1901 | Col. G. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1901 | G. W. Hall & Son's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1901 | Hall & Long's Circus | (Fred C. Hall & Frank Long) |
| 1902 | Col. G. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1902 | G.W. Hall & Son's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1902 | Hall & Sample's Circus | (F. W. Hall & G. C. Sample) |
| 1902 | Hall & Long's Circus | (Fred C. Hall & Frank Long) |
| 1902 | Hall's Big Tent Show | (R. V. Hall) |
| 1903 | G. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1903 | Hall & Sample's Circus | (F. W. Hall & G. C. Sample) |
| 1903 | Hall & Long's Circus | (Fred C. Hall & Frank Long) |
| 1903 | Hall's Big Tent Show | (R. V. Hall) |
| 1903 | Hackney & Hall Shows (circus?) | (Proprietors unidentified) |
| 1904 | F. W. Hall's United Wagon Shows | (F. W. Hall) |
| 1904 | Hall & Long's Circus | (Fred C. Hall & Frank Long) |
| 1904 | Hall's Big Tent Show | (R. V. Hall) |
| 1905 | Geo. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1905 | Wm. P. Hall Shows | (William P. Hall) |



| | |
|---|---|
| 1905 F.W. Hall's United Wagon Shows | (F. W. Hall) |
| 1905 Hall's Big Tent Show | (R. V. Hall) |
| 1906 Geo. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1906 F.W. Hall's United Wagon Shows | (F. W. Hall) |
| 1906 Hall's Big Tent Show | (R. V. Hall) |
| 1907 Geo. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1907 F.W. Hall's United Wagon Shows | (F. W. Hall) |
| 1908 Geo. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1908 F.W. Hall's United Wagon Shows | (F. W. Hall) |
| 1909 Geo. W. Hall's Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1910 Tiger Bill's WW & Col. G. W. Hall's Tr. An. Show | (M. S. Bodkin & maybe Geo. W. Hall Sr.) |
| 1911 Geo. W. Hall Jr. Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1912 Geo. W. Hall Jr. Circus | (Geo. W. Hall Jr.) |
| 1912 Hall & Miller Overland Shows | (Proprietor undertermined) |
| 1913 Wintermute Bros. & Hall's Circus | (Harry Wintermute & Frank E. Hall) |
| 1914 Wintermute Bros. & Hall's Circus | (Harry Wintermute & Frank E. Hall) |
| 1915 Wintermute Bros. & Hall's Circus | (Harry Wintermute & Frank E. Hall) |
| 1916 Wintermute Bros. & Hall's Circus | (Harry Wintermute & Frank E. Hall) |
| 1917 Wintermute Bros. & Hall's Circus | (Harry Wintermute & Frank E. Hall) |
| 1918 Wintermute Bros. & Hall's Circus | (Harry Wintermute & Frank E. Hall) |
| 1919 Col. Geo. W. Hall Shows | (Wm. "Low Grass" Campbell) |
| 1920 Col. Geo. W. Hall Shows | (Wm. "Low Grass" Campbell) |
| 1923 Hall Bros. Circus | (Frank E. Hall & Charles Russell Hall) |
| 1924 Hall Bros. Circus | (Frank E. Hall & Charles Russell Hall) |
| 1927 - | |
| 1940's Hall's Trained Animal Circus | (Charles Russell Hall) |

OTHER HALL & RELATED TITLES

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1927 - | |
| 1937 Vanderburg Bros. Circus | (Frank E. Hall) |
| 1889 Hall & O'Brien Show | (Prop. undertermined; no details known) |
| 1914 - | |
| 1928 H.A. Bruce Circus | (Prop. Howard Bruce, son-in-law of Geo. W. Hall Jr. by dtr. Grace) |
| 1888 Hall & Ringling | (An erroneous misprint of Hall & Bingley) |
| 1888 Hall & Quigley | (An erroneous misprint of Hall & Bingley) |

WHO'S WHO AMONG THE HALLS

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| George W. Hall Sr. | ("Col.") ("Popcorn") of Evansville, Wisconsin (1836-1918) |
| George W. Hall Jr. | (Son of George W. Hall Sr.) (c. 1856-1930) |
| Charles S. Hall | (Son of George W. Hall Sr.) |
| Charles Russell Hall | (Son of George W. Hall Jr.) |
| Frank E. Hall | (Son of George W. Hall Jr.) |
| Frank Hall (1895) | (of Chicago, Ill., different person from Frank E. Hall) |
| Fred C. Hall | (of Elkhart and Muncie, Indiana) |
| R. V. Hall | (of Fond du Lac, Wis., no apparent relation to Evansville Halls) |
| F. W. Hall | (of Iowa and Kansas; no other background known) |
| William P. Hall | ("Col.") ("Diamond Billy") (of Lancaster, Missouri) (1864-1932) |
| J. J. Hall | (of Westchester or Putnam County, N. Y.) |
| William Campbell | ("Low Grass") (Son-in-law of George W. Hall Sr. married his daughter Mabel) |
| H. A. Bruce | (Son-in-law of George W. Hall Jr., married his daughter Grace) |



These two heralds for Col. G. W. Hall's Shows (1884) and Geo. W. Hall's Shows (1905) illustrate the close similarity in the titles of two different circuses. Both heralds are in the collection of the Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wis.

One can therefore identify the years of this title by observing whether the name Hall comes first or second in the title.

In 1892, the New York Clipper made a fleeting reference to a Hall & Macart Circus. The writer has not been able to uncover confirming evidence to the identity of its proprietors, nor even to the fact that it even truly got off the ground. On the other hand, over the subsequent years, the name Macart appears in the capacities of both employee and family relative to the Halls of Evansville, Wisconsin, so one is inclined to tie them to the Hall & Macart thing of 1892, whatever it was or was not.

In 1910, there were two units of Tiger Bill's Wild West on the road. The full title of the second unit was Tiger Bill's Wild West & Col. G. W. Hall's Trained Animal Show. The Billboard identifies its manager as one M. S. Bodkin. To what extent Col. George Hall Sr. was involved is unclear. He had not had a show on the road since 1902. The Hall title was there, however, so to that extent it qualifies for mention here.

In 1891, Charles S. Hall was the first of Col. George's sons to take out his own circus. It was an overland wagon show under the title Charles Hall's Circus. This show operated through 1895. In that last season of 1895 it was known as Hall & Showers' Circus through a partnership with Andy Showers who had performing dogs, ponies and monkeys.

George W. Hall Junior, (c. 1856-1930)



George W. Hall, Jr. is pictured making a side show opening around 1895. Circus World Museum Collection.



This is the midway of the Geo. W. Hall's Circus, operated by G. W. Hall, Jr., taken around 1909. Pfening Collection.

another of the sons of Col. George W. Hall Senior, commenced his circus in 1894. Prior to that he had operated a circus sideshow which sometimes operated independently and sometimes teamed up with another circus as a sideshow, as with Gollmar Bros. Circus in 1893. At the start, this show used the title G. W. Hall, Jr.'s Circus. As a result, in the seasons of 1894 and 1895, there were three different circuses on the road simultaneously, each bearing the Hall name and managed by a father and his two sons.

G. W. Hall, Jr.'s Circus was always an overland wagon show. In 1894 it moved on 7 wagons with 18 horses. In 1895 it grew to 12 wagons, 2 elephants, 2 camels, 4 wild animal cages and a dozen performers. George W. Hall Junior operated this circus continuously through 1903. In 1904 he spent 7 weeks with his show on the Myers and Eller Carnival; then 16 weeks performing on the Van Amburg Circus, (Mugivan and Bowers proprietors, the beginning of the team that became the American Circus Corporation.) In 1905, George, Jr. was back on the road with 17 wagons, but this show closed after only 3 weeks, when the band quit. He took his show back to winter quarters at Evansville, Wisconsin, for a week to reorganize; then, resumed the road with 9 wagons and music by a bandorgan and a trap drummer. He continued with a similar wagon show through 1912.

Over the years, the title of the circus of George W. Hall Junior, appeared as G. W. Hall Jr.'s Circus, Geo. W. Hall Jr. Circus, G. W. Hall's Circus, Geo. W. Hall's Circus or G. W. Hall & Son's Circus. When, often at the same time, other circuses were operating under the titles of Col. G. W. Hall's Circus, Col. Geo. W. Hall's Circus, Hall & Bingley's Circus, Hall & McFlinn's Circus or McFlinn & Hall's Circus, plus Charles Hall's Circus or Hall & Showers' Circus, one begins to appreciate the utter dismay that can be experienced now, in trying to keep them straight...not to mention others involving Halls other than the Halls of Evansville, Wisconsin. In fact, few people

COMING SOON
THE GREAT
WM P. HALL
SHOWS
COLOSSAL CIRCUS **DOUBLE MENAGERIE**
ELEVATED STAGES AND REAL ROMAN HIPPODROME

AMERICA'S NEWEST AND MOST POPULAR TENTED AMUSEMENT INSTITUTION!

THE LATEST, NEWEST AND MOST MODERN MENAGERIE!
A MIGHTY UNIVERSITY OF NATURAL HISTORY!
 CONTAINING A COMPLETE COLLECTION OF
RARE WILD BEASTS!

1905

THE FIVE ST. LEONS
 AMERICA'S PREMIER ACROBATS.

THE FLYING DENOVAS
 THE WORLD'S GREATEST AERIALISTS.

THE ONLY BIG RESPONSIBLE SHOW COMING THIS SEASON

William P. Hall, not related to the other Halls, toured a circus in 1905. This is the cover of a four page two color herald used by the Great Wm. P. Hall Shows. Pfening Collection.

even among circus buffs, have realized that these titles represent three different circuses that were, at times, on the road simultaneously.

In the end, however, the clarifying answer that surfaces is rather simple. Between 1886 and 1902, the title of the circus of George W. Hall Senior was always teamed with the additional words of Colonel (abbreviated to "Col."), Bingley or McFlinn. If none of these three words appears with the name of G. W. or Geo. W. Hall, then the title is that of the circus of George W. Hall Junior.

Frank E. Hall (1883-1937) was a son of George W. Hall Jr. He was the "Son" of the G. W. Hall & Son's Circus. When George Hall Junior closed his circus at the end of the season of 1912, Frank E. Hall took that equipment, formed a partnership with another Wisconsinite Harry Wintermute, and launched the Wintermute Bros. & Hall's Circus in 1913. A mud show, it operated through 1918.

There were two showmen named William Campbell. They were nick-named "High Grass" and "Low Grass" to try to keep them straight, but even then, some confusion persisted as to which was which. William P. "High Grass" Campbell of Drummond, Oklahoma, was a cousin to the original Campbell brothers of the big Campbell Bros. Circus. William "Low Grass" Campbell was a son-in-law of Col. George W. Hall Senior, having married his daughter Mabel.

In 1919, William "Low Grass" Campbell launched a two car railroad show under the title of Col. Geo. W. Hall Circus. It is significant that the possessive apostrophe-S was dropped from the Hall name in the title for this 1919-1920 show, whereas it had always been used in the Colonel's title as long as he was alive. Col. George W. Hall Senior had died in 1918, so the show was no longer "his" in the truest sense; therefore, although it bore the title of Col. Geo. W. Hall, its printed materials no longer included the apostrophe-S. It is by this clue that the Col. Geo. W. Hall Show of 1919-1920 can be recognized apart from the original Col. Geo. W. Hall's Circus. Some references exist to the start of this show as being 1918, but this is wrong. Frank E. Hall was with this show of



Mrs. Frank Hall (Zella Wintermute) is pictured with elephant Pearl, on the Wintermute Bros. & Hall's Circus around 1917. Woodcock Collection.

1919-1920, presenting his performing dogs, ponies and mule. Sometime in mid-season 1920, this show changed its title to Campbell Bros. Circus and so operated through 1921. Subsequently, this same "Low Grass" Campbell became involved with the Campbell, Bailey & Hutchinson Circus (1922), where he was briefly a partner with William P. "High Grass" Campbell.

In 1923 and 1924, Frank E. Hall teamed up with his brother Charles Russell Hall (again, both sons of George W. Hall Junior,) in the operation of Hall Bros. Circus. They separated after the end of the 1924 season, and each went his own way.

Frank E. Hall founded the Vanderburg Bros. Circus in 1927 and operated it until his death in 1937.

Charles Russell Hall operated Hall's Trained Animal Circus intermittently into the 1940's. Sometimes it appeared as a conventional tent circus, but other times it appeared as acts playing fairs and celebrations.

Howard Bruce was the son-in-law of George W. Hall Junior, having married his daughter Grace. He operated H. Z. Bruce Circus 1914-1928. Mark Hall Bruce of Evansville, Wisconsin, a son of

This is the cover of a courier for Hall Bros. Circus of 1923, its proprietors being Frank E. Hall and Charles Russell Hall. Circus World Museum Collection.

1846
1923

A HIGH CLASS AMUSEMENT ORGANIZATION
The Crowning Triumph of 70 Years of Continuous Effort by Three Generations of Animal Trainers

FRANK E. HALL BROS.
CHARLES R.

Trained WILD ANIMAL SHOW

A Troupe of Performing Bears

A Rare and Interesting Feature THE CHIMPANZEE

From the African Wilds. The supposed connecting link between man and the brute creation. A most intelligent animal whose brain contains every wrinkle and fold in the brain of man.

ONE BIG NIGHT SHOW ONLY
Commencing at the usual hour.
FREE Show at 7:30

WILL EXHIBIT AT

Howard and Grace Bruce, has been very helpful to the Circus World Museum in providing information and materials of the Evansville Hall circuses.

Thus was the circus dynasty of the Halls of Evansville, Wisconsin. The remainder of this report will cover the people and shows named Hall who were not connected with the Evansville Halls.

Stuart Thayer advises that J. J. Hall, probably of Westchester County, New York, operated Hall's Circus & Menagerie in 1837. He took this show for a tour of the West Indies in 1838, probably under the same title. In 1839 and 1840 he aligned himself with two other prominent New England showmen to run the Hall, Nathans & Tufts New York Circus & Arena Company.

In the winter of 1889-1890, unidentified persons produced Hall & O'Brien's Show. It was apparently an indoor-stage show, and may have been more of a vaudeville type of operation than a circus.

Another Frank Hall (not Frank E. Hall,) unrelated to the Halls of Evansville, Wisconsin, operated an indoor circus and water show in Chicago in 1895 under the title of Frank Hall's Royal English Circus & German Water Carnival. It had considerable stature as an equestrian show, including such stalwart riders as William DeMotte, Rosie Meers, John Cleveland, Rose Dockrill and R. H. Dockrill (equestrian director.)

Fred C. Hall and Frank L. Long ran Hall & Long's Circus from 1900 through 1904, with a third partner named Eldon also being involved for the one season of 1900. In 1901, the show moved on 2 railroad cars comprised of a baggage car and a combination sleeper-diner. The big top was an 80 foot round top with two 40 foot middle pieces. The performance included single trapeze, hat spinning, horizontal bars, acrobats, tumbling, contortion, clown, slack wire, ladders, living statues and performing dogs, plus a concert featuring a travelog with pictures. It played cities for 3 to 6 day stands. This show was based in Elkhart and Muncie, Indiana.

F. W. Hall was from Nora Springs, Iowa and/or Kansas. In 1902 and 1903

he and G. C. Sample were responsible for Hall & Sample's Circus. In 1904 through 1908, it was F. W. Hall's United Wagon Shows, Sample apparently having dropped out of the picture.

R. V. Hall of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, operated Hall's Big Tent Show 1902-1906. It was an overland wagon show. Although its title may have suggested a repertoire show format, it came off as a circus including cages of wild animals.

In 1903, unidentified persons operated the Hackney & Hall Tent Show. It used a 90 foot round top with one 40 foot middle piece, carried 20 people, special scenery with a band and orchestra. It may have been more repertoire than circus.

It was thus that the season of 1902 saw five circuses on the road with the name of Hall in their titles; Col. G. W. Hall's Circus, G. W. Hall & Son's Circus, Hall & Sample's Circus, Hall & Long's Circus and Hall's Big Tent Show. That (1902) was the last tour for Col. G. W. Hall's Circus, however, so 1903 saw only the other four shows on the road. Actually, in 1903, Hackney & Hall Tent Show appeared, making again, a fifth Hall show; however, since it may not have been of a genuine circus format, perhaps we shouldn't count it as a fifth Hall circus of 1903.

Readers of the Bandwagon are sufficiently informed on William Preston Hall of Lancaster, Missouri (1864-1932). The only circus which bore his name in its title, (which is our concern in this report,) was the William P. Hall Shows of 1905. Otherwise, in his varied ventures, William P. Hall may have had a finger in more circus enterprises than any other one American. For the full account of the remarkable career of William Preston "Colonel" or "Diamond Billy" Hall, the reader is referred to the excellent article

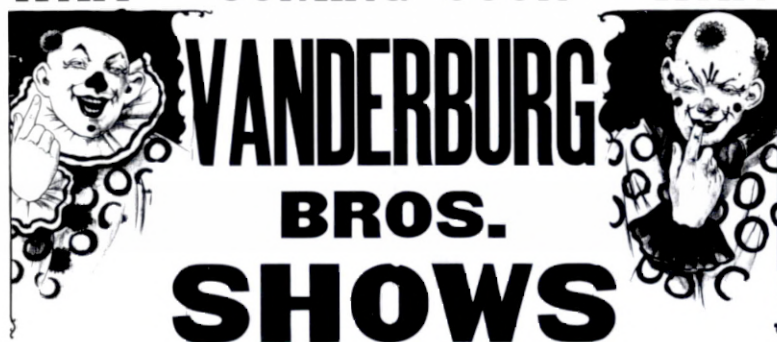
This is the back cover of a four page herald used by the Vanderburg Bros. Shows in 1937. Pfening Collection.

VANDERBURG BROS. SHOWS

NEW FEATURES - 25th ANNUAL TOUR - 20th CENTURY WONDERS

GRAND FREE EXHIBITION ON SHOW GROUNDS AT 1 AND 7 P. M. DAILY
2 PERFORMANCES DAILY - 2 and 8 P. M.
THERE WILL POSITIVELY BE NO CHANGE IN PLACE AND DATE
WILL EXHIBIT AT

WAIT - COMING SOON - WAIT



25TH ANNUAL TOUR

in the November-December 1966 Bandwagon by Fred D. Pfening III, as well as to the recent series of articles in the Bandwagon, by Tom Parkinson, based upon the William P. Hall papers now at the Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wisconsin.

The Hall & Miller Overland Shows appeared in 1912. The fact that this outfit comes to light in Wisconsin suggests the possibility that it may have been tied to one of the Halls of either Evansville or Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, but the confirmed identity of its proprietors remains a mystery.

The writer would not wish to close this report on Circus Halls, without giving a tip-of-the-hat to our Friend John Hall, currently General Manager of the Hoxie Bros. Circus.

We have a word of warning to the reader. Throughout this report, we give tips on how to differentiate one Hall show from another. Usually, these tips are based upon the most finite differences in titles, such as the use or non-use of nick-names, initials or the absence or presence of an apostrophe. These leads are dependable in the instances of printings or letterings firmly controlled by the show people, as in the case of wagons they themselves painted, letterheads or heralds they had printed or mats and cuts they furnished for newspaper advertising. On the other hand, when you encounter an independent reference such as an entry in the Billboard or New York Clipper, or perhaps a newspaper advertisement with no title-bearing cut, the carelessness or ignorance of a local typesetter may result in unreliable printings of title versions.

There is another source of confusion worth mentioning here. The phrase "hall show" is commonly used to express two different meanings. On the one hand, a Hall show (capitalized,) refers to any of the circuses bearing the name Hall in its title, usually one of the shows of the Halls of Evansville, Wisconsin. On the other hand, "hall show" (not capitalized) refers to a type of show that plays in-

This Riverside Printing Company litho was used by the early Vanderburg Bros. show in 1928. Pfening Collection.

door halls, such as Ringling Bros. Classic & Comic Concert Company. In the speaking of the term, one fails to communicate as to whether it is or is not capitalized, and can leave the listener thinking something other than the speaker intended.

Finally, we quote the oft-repeated words of Old Yankee Robinson, "Make Way For The Boss Show, Stand Down The Hall!"

Reader's Comments

Sparks Circus, Season of 1947

The story of the 1947 Sparks Circus by Joseph T. Bradbury which was published in the Jan-Feb and Mar-Apr 1970 Bandwagon stated that after the show closed at Tacoma, Wash. on September 7 and was stored in Renton, Wash., Pete Kortes, who owned the sideshow, was awarded by the court the show's six flat cars as payment on the debt owed him. At the time the author did not know what disposition Kortes made of the flat cars as several inquiries on the matter directed to him were not answered. When apprised of this situation C. A. "Red" Sonnenberg said that he was personally acquainted with Kortes and that he would get this information and forward it to the author. In time Red did talk to Kortes and learned the fate of the six flat cars. According to Kortes he was awarded the flat cars by the court but that Barney Gerety also had a mortgage on two of them and it was directed that he would have to pay Gerety out of the receipts from their sale. Kortes said he sold them to a dealer in Seattle who cut them up and disposed of them as scrap.

Kortes, at the time he talked with Red, also came forth with another previously unpublished (and unconfirmed) item of interest concerning the demise of the 1947 Sparks show. Kortes said that Johnny Denton owner of the Denton Shows (carnival) was interested in obtaining the Sparks property and shortly before it folded gave a \$1,000.00 down payment to James Edgar, the show's owner, but almost immediately creditors closed in forcing the show to cease operation. As a result Denton's money was lost in the shuffle and he ended up with nothing but "experience." Denton, however, took it philosophically saying that "he had shot craps with his grand and lost."

Unfortunately Red Sonnenberg shortly after obtaining this information for Bandwagon departed this life for the old showmen's heaven.

Barnett Bros. Circus

William W. Farmer of Eaton, Ohio brings to our attention that some of the photos in the Ray W. Rogers Shows article in the Sept-Oct 1974 Bandwagon are incorrectly dated. He points out that Photo No. 16 on page 12 was dated 1935 but that the Chevrolet tractors pictured are both 1937 models. These can be compared with the 1935 model in Photo 18 on the opposite page. Also on page 14, photo no. 19 pictures a 1937 model Chevrolet despite the photo being dated 1935. This vehicle can be compared with the 1935 model in photo 20. Mr. Farmer's observations are obviously correct which means the photos in question should be dated at least 1937 or later. Since the Wallace Bros. title was used by Rogers in 1937 in all probability these photos were taken in 1938 when he again used the Barnett Bros. title. We regret this error in dating the photos but it was purely unintentional as 1935 was the date put on the set by William Koford the original photographer. Evidently somehow these particular photos were dated incorrectly and the author and editor did not catch it in time. Since the Bandwagon is an historical journal accuracy is our by-word and we continually strive for it. Readers are always urged when they spot an error to let us know so that it can be corrected in a subsequent issue.

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THREE SHEET

By Dave Price

I think the time has come to pay proper tribute to that most famous of all sizes of show bill: the three sheet. Three sheets have been immortalized in slang, humor, and ballad. They have been the great utility bill which always seems to fit on the end of a daub or large window hit. They can be posted in a fairly small space and yet can be read for a block. They are big enough to date a daub but fold small enough to fit into the hod of a lithographer.

The three sheet is truly the boy wonder of the family of posting paper. Its illegitimate half-brother the two sheet is really only worthy of minstrel show "snipes" and cannot be called a true posting paper. Notice I refrain from using the term "multiple sheet" as I never once heard the term used on a bill car. The correct term to any billposter is simply "posting paper."

The slang expression "three sheeting" refers to bragging on one's self. The use originated on small "hall shows" who, after a year or two of billing with small window lithos or handbills, would finally open one season with three sheets as a way of announcing that they were now in the big time.

Most of the humor of the three sheet had to do with the fact that the bill neatly fitted the side of an outhouse,

being just three and one half by seven feet. Every bill poster will tell you of the time he posted an outhouse with three sheets only to discover that he had sealed some old lady up inside. I would be the last one to discredit these stories.

Old timers who were on one of the Ringling-Barnum cars years back will tell the story of the feud between the billers and that star of the show, Miss Lillian Leitzel. The tale goes that the boys put so many of her three sheets on outhouses that they started calling her "Outhouse Lil" or some approximation thereof. Word finally got back to the show of this gag and Miss Leitzel, seeing no humor in the situation, is said to have gone to Mr. John Ringling and raised so much hell that he wired the printing house to stop printing three sheets showing the dainty Miss. So the billers had no more chance to plaster her on the little buildings out back.

Perhaps no one can vouch for the above but we do know that a "Bill-posters' Ballad of Outhouse Lil" survives. I saved Fred some editing time by writing it this way but if you've ever heard a billposter talk. . . well what more can I say? Here goes:

Down along the railroad
Upon an outhouse door,
You'll find a three sheet standing

Where it never stood before.

And to all the towners passing by
It's just another bill;

But to those of us up on the car
It's good old "Outhouse Lil."

Now that bill of Lil's we posted on
Every outhouse we could find
And when Lil found out about it
She almost lost her mind.

And then when Mr. Ringling
Found out it made her sore,
He changed our paper order
And that three sheet we saw no more.

Now whenever I post an outhouse,
I always put one on the door
In memory of that bill of Lil's
That I shall post no more.

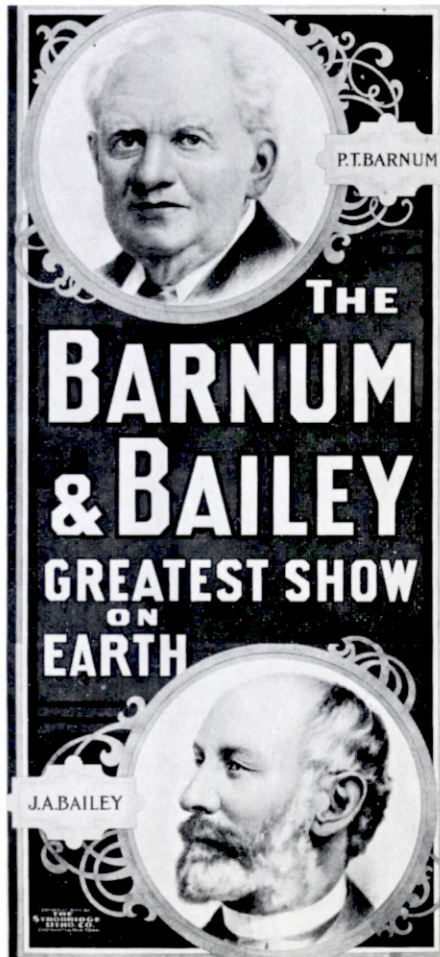
Her name was Lillian Leitzel
And she gave 'em all a thrill

But to those of us up on the car
She was plain old "Outhouse Lil."

A selection of Strobridge three sheet bills are shown here, including the Leitzel posters. All of these are from the Harold Dunn Collection.

The Ringling lady on horseback is 1914, the Miss Leitzel and the giraffe bill is 1916, the Barnum & Bailey portrait bill, clown and polar bear and Ringling lady on trapeze are all 1917, the Ringling Barnum clown & polar bear is 1922, the Dainty Miss Leitzel and Theol Nelson posters are from the 1923 season.

The litho photos are now part of the Harold Dunn Collection.



MISS LEITZEL PHYSICAL MARVEL

World's
Greatest
Gymnast



RINGLING BROS CIRCUS

THE BARNUM & BAILEY

GREATEST
SHOW
ON EARTH

THE
ABSOLUTE
PERFECTION

OF
ALL
THAT IS
GREAT
IN CIRCUS
ACHIEVEMENT



RINGLING BROS



RINGLING BROS AND BARNUM & BAILEY

COMBINED SHOWS



THE
GREATEST
SHOW
ON EARTH

PERFORMING 80 REVELATIONS
A MINUTE ON A 12 INCH BASE
ASTOUNDING FEAT
ACCOMPLISHED ONLY BY
MISS THEOL NELSON

RINGLING BROS AND BARNUM & BAILEY

THE
GREATEST
SHOW
ON EARTH
WORLD'S
MOST
MARVELOUS
LADY
GYMNAST



DAINTY
Miss LEITZEL

RINGLING BROS AND BARNUM & BAILEY

A
COLOSSAL
COMBINATION
OF
ALL
THAT IS
GREAT
IN
CIRCUS
ACHIEVEMENT



1974 THE CIRCUS YEAR IN REVIEW

By Don Marcks

The question uppermost in everyone's mind at the beginning of the year was will the energy crisis allow us enough gas to operate. A scramble developed as shows sought to buy gas tanker trucks as a means of keeping their rolling equipment filled with fuel. As it turned out these units weren't really needed, but those shows that had them found they could save money by buying their gas supplies in bulk form.

One of the first shows out was the Cole All Star TV Circus, which plays the eastern states each winter as a fund raising project for schools and various organizations. Just before the opening date, owner James M. Cole said, "We'll tour as long as we can get gasoline. We can't find out anything and the whole thing is a mess." The tour was completed with almost no problems and was rather successful too.

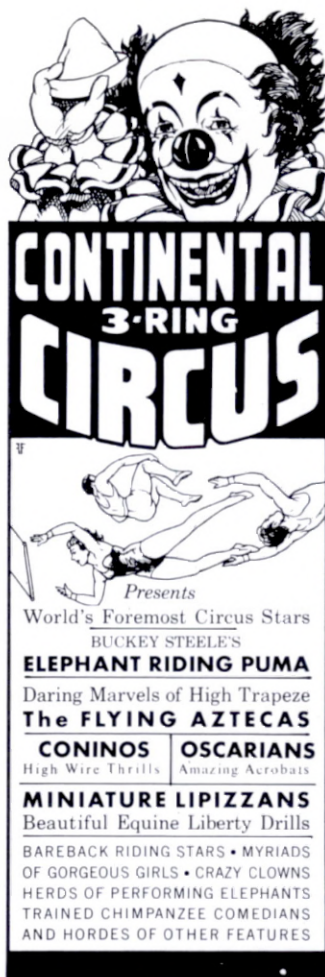
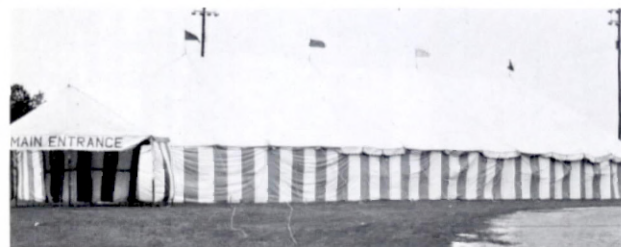
Despite the problems that seemed to confront show business in general there were many who were eager to get their new show on the road. As a result 1974 saw several new titles for the first time.

By mid-January, Charles Moyer announced he was taking his new Charles Bros. Circus on tour and would be out from April to September. The Barnes & Daily Circus, formerly Lewis Bros., was set to open and just waiting for better weather. King Bros., Sells & Gray, Beatty-Cole and Fisher Bros. all announced they would be opening early and planned long tours.

Then the 104th edition of Ringling-Barnum (Blue Unit) was launched at Venice, Fla. and after a couple of days moved into St. Petersburg, where the annual TV show filming was carried out. Host for the "Highlights of the Circus" program was Flip Wilson, and the show featured Michu, the 33 in. midget from Hungary and the Samel Mixed Animal Act from East Germany.

In the meantime, Mattel, Inc., continued to be troubled with financial problems and announced they had sold some of their subsidiaries in order to gain quick cash to meet an interest payment with the Wells Fargo Bank. Rumors

The Roberts Bros. Circus, new big top is shown on the Duluth, Ga. lot on April 22, 1974. Joe Bradbury Photo.



Forrest Freeland designed the newspaper ads for the Charles Seldman Continental 3 Ring Circus. The fine indoor show closed shortly after opening in Florida.

concerning a proposed sale of the Ringling-Barnum Circus were running wild, but it was finally narrowed down to the fact that a Gulf Oil Corp. subsidiary was the prospective buyer.

By late January Voorheis Bros. was making its annual Jan/Feb tour in Michigan. Circus Vargas had opened in Texas

and it was reported that Circus Williams was up for sale.

An announcement that Garden Bros. would open its season in Altoona, Pa., and was going to play some dates that had traditionally been those of Clyde Bros. Circus, gave rise to rumors that Ian Garden was buying the Howard Suesz Show. This rumor was quickly denied by both parties and nothing further was heard about that rumor.

Ringling-Barnum's Red Unit was launched for the season at Venice, and featured Gunther Gebel-Williams, along with some of the big show regulars. George Hubler had his International Circus at Mentor, Okla., and the Happy-time Circus was having gas troubles in California.

Caught up in a Congressional investigation into oil company profits Gulf Oil Corp. admitted they were preparing to buy the Ringling-Barnum Circus and Circus World Park in Florida. Then bowing to pressure the company's board of directors rejected the planned purchase.

In February Circus Vargas was taking a beating from the weather in Texas, while Fisher Bros. was preparing to open. They planned a long tour with all dates 100% sponsored. The show's big top would be a 70 ft. round end with one 40 ft. center, capable of seating 1,200 people.

The long awaited Circus World Park, in Florida, was finally opened to the public amid a flurry of advertising and publicity. Those who were there opening day said the place was "fabulous" and that it would some day equal Disneyland and other such attractions. But it was destined to grow no larger and so remained just as it had been planned, a preview park for what might yet come.

While this was going on in Florida the annual Caltech Circus was in progress at Pasadena, Calif. The show played two weekends and drew some 4,190 people,

Cliff Vargus changed the Miller Johnson title to Circus Vargas for the 1974 tour that took the show across the country twice. This photo of some of the spec wagons was taken in February in Tampa, Fla. Pfening Photo.





King Bros. Circus moved into Texas for a May tour. This lot scene was taken in Fredericksburg, Texas on May 2, 1974. Leroy Sweetland Photo.

which was almost a full house for each performance.

The big news in February was the fact that Ringling-Barnum and Circus America would be playing Washington, D.C., at the same time. The latter show was to be produced by Paul Kaye for Capital Center after negotiations broke down between the Center and the Big Show.

A famous old title—Dailey Bros. Circus—returned to the road early in the year, operated by John Davenport, the son of the late Ben Davenport. It was a small show, but generally good, observers said, and its big top was a 60 x 120 ft.

Perhaps the biggest shock of the year came when Schlitz called off the annual July 4th parade at Milwaukee. The energy crisis was blamed in that there might not be enough fuel to get all the horses to and from Milwaukee on schedule. However, Schlitz said they felt sure the parade could be continued in 1975.

The Fleckles Circus played its usual Shrine dates and this year featured the George Hanneford Family, John Cuneo and his animals, Oscar Cristiani's elephants and the Flying Armours.

Suits and countersuits were filed in Washington, D.C., courts as Ringling-Barnum did its best to keep Circus America from operating. Local newspapers carried large ads for both shows, side-by-side, reminding us all of those old circus wars.

Don Francisco launched his Pan American Circus at Westchester, N. Y. in conjunction with the Corona Family and used their name in the show title. Ringling's units were pulling good crowds and even with a minimum of advertising Holiday Hippodrome was doing well.

In early March, John Strong announced he would have three show units on the road during the summer months. Irvin and Kenneth Feld embarked on a world-wide trip to find new talent. The Bale Buckeye Circus opened its short tour in Ohio, and Hubert Castle's season was well underway, with Joe Hartman handling the cat act.

When Ringling-Barnum announced they would add a side show to their circus for the Washington, D.C., date, Circus America made plans for a similar feature.

Then one said they'd have a petting zoo and the other followed with a similar statement.

By this time Polack Bros. was playing its usual Shrine dates with a strong show. The Normark & Hood show "Children's Magic Circus" was renamed "All Star Circus" and the Hanneford Circus was drawing raves for its strong program.

In March several former RBBB stock holders filed a series of suits against Mattel, Inc. They charged the company had falsified reports so stock holders who vote for their purchase of the circus. All

The big opposition date of 1974 was in Washington, D.C., when Ringling-Barnum and Circus America clashed. This old style "rat sheet" ad was used by Circus America.



The Lewis Bros. Circus, number two unit of Hoxie Tucker, hosted the CFA convention in Springfield, Ohio, in June. Bobby Gibbs elephant ride and the big top are shown on the Springfield lot. Pfening Photo.

of the top Mattel people were named in the suits, which sought some \$40 million in refunds.


During a performance at Miami, Fla., aerialist Jacqueline Zerbini fell from her trapeze and suffered an injured heel and broken tail bone. Texas was getting overcrowded with shows, all seeking to play the same spots. Other shows announced their intention of going into the state and it was said there were so many show agents in Texas that they would hold a convention soon.

In late March, Paul Kaye had his Circus America program set and announced that some of the top names in show business would be with the circus. This included Emmett Kelly, Karl Walenda, Gene Randow, etc., and even some European stars were to be included. That report was followed by one from Ringling-Barnum that they'd have Congressmen and Senators as clowns and elephant riders on their opening night, while Senator Hubert Humphrey would be the Honorary Ringmaster.

By the time the month drew to a close Hubert Castle was making his eighth appearance in Portland, Ore., to good business and Hamid-Morton was drawing big crowds, at Topeka and Kansas City. It was at Topeka (Mar. 1) that an elephant bolted during the show and darted into a section of seats filled with children. Several injuries occurred before the elephant could be led backstage.

It was in early April that Charles Seldman announced he was opening his Continental Circus at Fort Lauderdale, Fla. and would then move north along the coast before moving inland.

Meanwhile in Washington, D.C., both Ringling-Barnum and Circus America were competing for the public's and press' attention through a series of promotional stunts. RBBB stars, clowns and even Irvin Feld were speaking to local civic groups, performing for the press and offering merchants special ticket deals. Circus America was offering an advance look at some of their stars and the Washington Post said that Circus America came off best with its presen-



“... this battle in the great circus war finds Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey the loser, and Circus America on top of the heap.”
Roy Meacham, WTTG-TV

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CIRCUS AMERICA IS NOT IN ANY WAY CONNECTED WITH RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS, WHICH WILL APPEAR ELSEWHERE.



The Big John Strong Circus made its annual tour of the midwest again in 1974. This photo was taken during a July 4th stand in Columbus, Ohio. Pfening Photo.

tation of the Albarracino Duo who performed while suspended from a construction crane.

Sells & Gray was rolling along under the guidance of its manager Wilson Storey, offering a good show. They elected to stay in the East, to keep jumps to a minimum, because of the energy crisis.

A circus featuring new talent and sponsored by the Lions Club was announced in Pennsylvania, with an opening date at Allentown. The show got underway late in the year and was called a big success.

Tragedy struck Bill Brickley's poodle act when his truck and camper were destroyed by a flash fire near Evergreen, Ala. Four dogs died and all the costumes cages and personal items were lost. Bill and his partner barely escaped without being burned.

Polack Bros. was now featuring a new opening number, instead of Baron Von Uhl's lions they had Lilli Kristensen's leopards. Hubert Castle was playing to good business in Ohio, King Bros. was doing OK under manager Harry Rawls and it was announced the show was heading west. Meanwhile Fisher Bros. were fighting rain and mud in Texas.

Then came news that Robert Earl would take out Roberts Bros. Circus, opening in Georgia. They would use a 60 ft. round end top with three 30 ft. center pieces. Seating would be available for 1,100 people.

Lewis Bros., the No. 2 unit of Hoxie Tucker, was operating under its manager John Lewis and featured Bobby Gibb's animals and the Zerbis. The show became the CFA Convention circus and made an instant hit with everyone.

Perhaps because of previous sale reports, rumors started that the Beatty-Cole Circus was for sale. This was quickly denied by the show owners, but all year long reports would pop up that some firm or individual was dickering for the show and the reason the deal fell through was that the asking price was too high. The show's owners just ignored most of these rumors and as of this moment no

official word has come down concerning even the latest of the rumors.

Late in April the Wallace & Rogers Circus announced they would go into Alaska after playing several Canadian dates. This gave rise to rumors that De Wayne Bros. wouldn't make their annual trek to the far north, but the rumors weren't based on fact and so Alaska saw two circuses in 1974.

Bale's Buckeye Circus wound up its successful tour and new records were being established by RBBB at most of its stands. The Russell-Johnson Circus was scheduled to open, but didn't make it. They tried again two weeks later and after a few days folded for good.

Ringling-Barnum's arrival in Washington, DC was greeted by rain. Then on April 6th, while performing with Circus America, Dolly Nock fell from a trapeze but suffered only minor injuries. Dailey Bros. suffered a blowdown at Dallas on April 10th and Howard Suesz was busy putting shows together for some dates in Florida. Carson & Barnes had some late shows when the canvas truck developed troubles and had to be towed in a few times.

Beatty-Cole's scheduled opening at Commack, L.I. in April, was delayed because of a hockey play-off game, which cost the show three days. The circus was

The giant Carson & Barnes Circus had an early opening in Texas. This big top interior shot was taken in Seguin, Texas on March 31, 1974. Leroy Sweetland Photo.



A strong feature of the Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus in 1974 was the John Herriott family. The Herriotts are shown with their liberty horses in Columbus, Ohio. Pfening Photo.

offering an almost new show, with new wardrobe, etc.

Barnes & Dailey was playing promotional dates in Indiana. Just prior to their opening date a tornado rushed straight for the show's quarters at Medora, Ind., then suddenly veered off, causing damage to nearby areas. The circus personnel were the first on the scene to help their unlucky neighbors.

By late April Polack was on the West coast, the Int'l All Star Circus had signed to play Circus Towne (N.M.) for the summer and the New England Shrine Circus tour was underway. The Washington, DC date for Ringling-Barnum and Circus America turned out to be good for both shows and there was no real factual information on the dates available.

The Gatti-Charles Circus was offering its strongest show ever on the West coast while the George Matthews Circus opened to good business at Santa Clara, Calif. They had their old top, which showed signs of heavy use, and expected a new one sometime soon.

By May, John Strong had put out two units, both of which were doing well. The show had some personnel and equipment problems and soon most of the help had left, but after a few weeks the circus was touring as per usual.

In Florida, the Sailor Circus drew 2,000 people on its opening night at Sarasota. Director Bill Lee said their new tent, which was 232 x 115 ft., had cost \$24,950 and could seat 2,500 people. Reid Bros. opened in the Pacific Northwest using the title "Grand Safari Circus."

Happytime Circus was playing schools formerly booked by John Strong and Hamid-Morton was getting raves on most of their dates. Dailey Bros. was also coming in for their share of praise, while Carson & Barnes played a few Texas dates with just the sidewall.

Bad weather hurt attendance for Roberts Bros. in Georgia, while in the West Europorama was doing well in warm weather. The latter show was set

for its longest tour ever, which included the Far North and Mid-west areas.

Huge crowds attended RBBB at Baltimore giving that show credit for the biggest attendance and grosses ever recorded at the Baltimore Civic Center. At Redlands, Calif. the Great Y Circus celebrated its 34th year with some big crowds and in the mid-west Franzan Bros. was preparing for a summer tour.

Hoxie Bros. again featured their round blue and white top, which had three rings grouped around a single center pole. It accommodated 3,000 people and the show's program remained fairly steady all year long.

An innovation this year with Royal Wild West Circus was the old-style wild west set-up. It covered a ground area of 300 x 200 ft. and had seating on three sides with a pictorial backdrop in the rear. It was a unique idea and folks seemed to like it.

Clyde Bros. played Atlanta, Ga., then laid off for a bit, during which time all the equipment was renovated. Gatti-Charles played in a Boeing building at Seattle, while Cincinnati had five shows close by.

In May Circus Vargas was back in California after one coast-to-coast trip. They were using the tent in about every other spot, due to a lack of help. Some spots they showed without a top were cold and damp, making people wonder what happened to the highly advertised tent performance.

Some of the Hoxie crew got mixed up in a storm and set up their equipment on the school grounds at Winchester, Ind. (May 17). It wasn't long before they discovered the error and that the circus lot was right across the street.

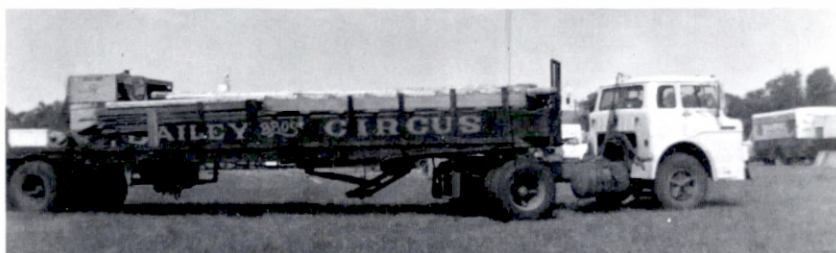
Paul Kaye's Circus played Duluth, Minn. (May 10-12) and drew well, breaking local attendance records. As a result he easily signed the date for another appearance in 1975.

On the West Coast a small promotional circus made a couple of dates to fair business, the Early American Circus was making its second appearance and the Emmett Kelly, Jr. Circus was playing college dates, then jumped from Spokane to Michigan for more dates. Meanwhile Bob Snowdon purchased the old Gargantua cage for his monkey farm.

Of special interest was the mid-year announcement that 20th Century Fox would make a movie on the life of Tom Mix. The circus portion was to be filmed on the George Matthews Circus, but actual film work was delayed for a year or so.

Hubler's International Circus ended its year at Buffalo, N.Y. with a big date (May 16-19). At the Ringling Museum of the Circus workmen were restoring the Harp & Jesters calliope wagon, while the Southwest Circus offered a fun program at the Southwest Ice Arena in Chicago.

In June, Mattel announced they had negotiated a new credit arrangement, but would no longer have any money for the



The well known Dailey Bros. title returned to the road in 1974, under the ownership of Ben Davenport relatives. The pole and seat semi is pictured in Benkelman, Nebr. on September 5, 1974. Joe Fleming Photo.

two Ringling-Barnum circuses or Circus World Park. A new contract between RBBB and the Nassau Veterans Coliseum gave both sides the right to cancel out whenever the circus' gross went below \$500,000.

Despite the fact the calendar said "June" there were storms in many states and shows like the George Matthews Circus, playing in Wyoming, encountered snow, wind and rain. It was reported, but never confirmed, that every tented circus on the road, playing in the mid-west, suffered a blowdown within days of each other as the storm raced back and forth across the area.

As usual the Castle show reported good business in Canada and King Bros. was doing OK in the Southwest. John Strong's Circus was struck by a tornado in Oklahoma, Gatti-Charles enlarged the show for some indoor dates and Royal Bros. was getting started in Canada. This show has a 100 ft. round end top with two 30 ft. and one 40 ft. centers.

A mix-up of dates for North Platte, Nebr., almost cost Clyde Bros. the stand. With the help of highway police most of the show was rounded up and the day worked out well with a good show and good attendance. When Carson & Barnes arrived in the same town shortly afterwards they had rain and mud, and the local Buffalo Bill Wild West Show offered a program with a full sized railroad train.

In Southern California a newspaper complained about the handling of animals with a small circus, while in Florida

The number two unit of Dailey Bros. Circus, used a 60 foot round top with three 30 foot middles. This "Blue Unit" is shown in Stapleton, Nebr. on September 23. Joe Fleming Photo.



Robert Baudy was pleading for help to fight the animal control laws. He threatened to phase out his breeding facilities if some changes weren't made. Everywhere Shriners and fans in general were starting to rise up to fight the strict laws.

By June there was no longer any sign of an energy crisis. Gas prices were up and there was plenty of gas for everyone and all seemed right with the world. However, even before June the signs were there, mostly hidden by the energy crisis, but now at long last the recession was on its way and starting to mushroom everywhere. Cutbacks and layoffs were coming daily and by the end of the year there was no doubt in anyone's mind, the country was headed for its worst recession ever.

On June 15th, La Norma announced her retirement and was treated to a farewell party in the center ring of the Hubert Castle Circus at Vancouver, BC. In Salt Lake City an elephant sold to Paul Kaye was attached because someone hadn't paid D. R. Miller his \$5,000 fee. A payment was made and the elephant was returned just in time for the show's opening performance.

On the west coast the Happytime Circus was playing fairs, while in the East, Manual Ramos left the Continental Circus and formed his own show, the Oscanian Bros. Circus. The American National Circus played a July 4th date at Long Beach, Calif. directed by Parley Baer and Gatti-Charles was drawing raves for their indoor dates. In Ohio, the Lewis Bros. Circus was battling mud and rain. Garden Bros. was doing well and at times even had two units going, while Ringling-Barnum was setting new records in New York City.

Veteran elephant man Freddie Logan was injured when a light unit fell and struck him on the head. Hospitalized for a few weeks he has returned to his usual duties with no apparent after damage.

In July rumors started popping up that some west coast shows were in financial trouble. The George Matthews

Circus acquired a new orange and white tent, while at Cincinnati the John Strong Circus was delayed on its arrival because of heavy fog. Wallace & Rogers were in Alaska, Circus Kirk was getting praise in the east and at Boston the Red Unit's show children presented their own circus which was called The Boston Tea Party.

Although there was no circus parade at Milwaukee, Wisc., on July 4th, the Circus World Museum beefed up its entertainment programs and out in Redwood City, Calif., the Early American Circus offered a circus parade as a unit within the big parade offered there. In the mid-west a proposed 11 week tour by a new small show was cancelled at the last minute.

When RBBB's Blue Unit opened in Los Angeles many Hollywood people were on hand to get the ball rolling for the opening night benefit program. Dailey Bros. announced they would stay in Minnesota because business was good for them there, and Charles Bros. was playing in Ohio, while Sells & Gray were making dates in New England.

Jack Mills died at Cleveland on July 20th, thus ending his dream of returning to full time circus operation. His death also brought an end to reports that the Mills Bros. Circus would go back on the road.

During Polack's engagement in Las Vegas their elephants ran away and handler Jay Jones suffered a broken leg while trying to round them up. Advance ticket sales were up everywhere for RBBB's Blue Unit and Paul Kaye's Circus was in San Diego. Then when the Paul Kaye Circus performers were waiting for their plane to Hawaii, a bomb exploded ripping the building apart. Two people were killed and several were injured, among them aerialist Arturo Tostl.

Clyde Bros. made some last minute date changes in Ohio in late July. The Royal Bros. Circus was fighting rain on a daily basis and Sells & Gray's bull truck

The baby elephant of the Stebbing Royal European Circus is pictured on the Springfield, Ohio fairgrounds in 1974. Al Conover Photo.



rolled over at Syracuse, N. Y. on August 1st.

Mattel, Inc. agreed to accept a court order that would appoint two members to their board of directors. Later company officials were stripped of their powers and the court appointed a new board of directors. It was found the company had juggled its books and the stock was taken off the market.

In August several circus acts were laying over at Murray Hill's quarters in Wisconsin waiting for some work. Rudy Bros. Circus was called the "sleeper" show of the year by a reviewer who said the show dazzled with top talent, including the George Hanneford family. Royson Bros. was in Tennessee and RBBB made a record run from Anaheim to Long Beach.

John Strong's Circus followed the Stebbings Circus into Lincoln, Nebr. and did poorly. Cecil "Mac" Roberts, an old-time RBBB employee became ill and was admitted to a hospital at Miami. Barnes & Daily Circus reported business was picking up.

At Canton, Ohio (Aug. 19) heavy rains drenched the George Matthews Circus. The Circus Royal was playing the Altmont, N.Y. Fair (Aug. 13-17) and on Aug. 26th, Inge Bisbini fell from her trapeze while performing at the Ohio State Fair. At Ann Arbor, Mich. (Aug. 27) a Beatty-Cole animal man was attacked by one of the shows elephants, but escaped with minor injuries.

In September the Texas Shrine dates got underway with a series of shows that was to run into November. Business was generally good and because of rising costs at least one stand increased their ticket prices.

The first of the shows to report the recession was hurting them was John Strong's Circus while touring the mid-west. Other shows continued to report business was good, but by the end of the year several would be admitting that business wasn't up to their expectations. One showman said people just weren't buying tickets in the second half of the year.

While helping to set up Royal Bros. Circus at a stand on Prince Edward Is-

land, Steve Raborn moved a pole which came in contact with an overhead electric wire. His father, Robert, who was standing nearby watching, saw what happened and rushed to aid his son and both were electrocuted.

At Munster, Ind. (Sept. 12) a crowd of people were asked to leave the Beatty-Cole big top for the safety of their cars as a fierce storm swept towards the circus. About a half hour later the storm had subsided to the point where the circus performance could be started, and most people returned to see the performance.

Beatty-Cole drew well at Ypsilanti, Mich. (Aug. 27) and Circus Internationale did well during its Kentucky State Fair stand (Aug. 19-24). Fisher Bros. reported business was better than expected in the mid-west. They were using a 70 ft. round end top with one 40 ft. center. The Emmett Kelly, Jr. Circus played a benefit on Long Island, while Circus Vargas, with their 315 x 160 ft. tent moved onto the island shortly afterwards. On the Pacific Coast RBBB was still setting new records for attendance, while Barnes & Daily drew good crowds at Republic, Mich. (Aug. 19) and Olympic International went into the South Carolina State Fair for six days. Arriving back on the west coast John Strong reported business was picking up and now he planned to stay out as long as possible in an effort to recoup some of his losses.

Two big surprises came in October—Harry Hunt announced that his daughter Marsha was taking Hunt Bros. out in 1975 and that he had already booked most of the proposed tour. The other surprise was an announced split of the Bill English-Tommy Hanneford operation. English plans to take his own show out in 1975, while Tommy will continue to operate the Hanneford Circus.

After closing its 1974 tour Circus Kirk called it the best season ever. They moved their show office into the town of East Berlin, Pa., which is about a mile away from the actual show quarters. The

This photo of the Hoxie Bros. Circus was taken in Lebanon, Ohio during the 1974 season. Al Conover Photo.





The colorful new plastic big top of the George Matthews Great London Circus is pictured in this 1974 view. Calvin L. Davis Photo.

move would permit them to have more room and better facilities, they said.

When Beatty-Cole played Canton, Ohio (Sept. 20) they had stiff competition from local football schedules, yet drew fairly well. The day before at Youngstown the show had an ideal location, in the heart of the downtown area, thanks to an unfinished redevelopment project. At Mt. Vernon (Oct. 1) the show's bull truck rolled over but no serious injuries were reported.

Winding up its 1974 tour in the mid-west, Europorama owner John Winn said it was the best year the show had experienced. Next year they planned an even longer tour, he added.

Polack Bros. worked as a fair attraction at Pomona, Calif. (Sept. 23-29) then promptly signed a return engagement for 1975. In Nebraska a show called Al G. Clark & Sons turned out to be the former Dailey Bros. Circus, which wasn't drawing too well. In mid-October the new Berosini International Circus played for two weeks in Michigan and Indiana.

During RBBB's engagement at Chicago a leopard attacked a young peanut vendor, and in Denver an aerialist fell when a rigging bolt pulled loose. This led to the filing of a complaint against the show with the Occupational Health & Safety Administration. After an investigation they found 28 violations and the circus was fined \$280.

The USA National Circus was named to produce the annual PAL Circus at San Francisco's Cow Palace, Holiday Hippodrome was playing dates in Missouri and Gil Gray was presenting his annual Dr. Pepper Circus at the Texas State Fair. Lewis Bros. Circus closed its tour and Bobby Gibbs opened his own little show in Texas, then shortly afterwards Lewis Bros. was put on the sale block.

Hoxie Tucker bought the Barnes & Dailey Circus when it closed for the year and put it into new quarters near Orlando, Fla. Then the show was sold to Bob Trippe and Parley Baer who said the circus will henceforth be known as the Mid-American Circus.

Another shock was received in No-

vember when Schlitz said it would no longer sponsor the Milwaukee July 4th parade. Instead the company planned to turn its attention to other projects. Spiraling costs were blamed for the cancellation. At Canton, an announced appearance of the Hanneford Circus was cancelled because the advance sale was down, something that was blamed on the recession.

By November the usual Christmas holiday shows were getting underway or were already playing around the country. George Matthews Circus had ended its tour and said the year had not been a good one. The Early American Circus played a Pumpkin Festival at Half Moon Bay, Calif. and the Texas Shrine dates ended on a good note.

Patterson Bros. played a few dates in November, RBBB announced the hiring of new attractions for 1975 and John Strong said he would put out five Christmas units. In Florida Ringling's Clown College graduated some 48 student clowns and offered contracts to 20 of them.

The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey blue unit presented the 104th edition of the Greatest Show on Earth. This newspaper ad announced the Madison Square Garden date in New York in 1974.



The ticket wagon of the Royal Bros. Circus is shown during the 1974 season. Photo from Al Stencell.

In early December as the RBBB Blue Unit train raced towards Florida, Car No. 151 erupted into flames and before the train could be stopped and the fire extinguished four people had died. The other occupants of the car escaped into adjoining cars.

By the time the year was over the recession was serious and still unemployment was mushrooming higher and higher. While most of the shows openly announced they'd had good seasons, several reported unofficially that the year wasn't that good and that high costs had eaten up most of the profits that might have been made earlier in the year.

But there was one thing all show owners were agreeing on and that was the 1975 season. It will be a rough one, they said, and you can expect to see several shows going off the road before the year is over.

Among the circus people who died during the year were: Ben Beno, C. A. Sonneberg, Amy De Voe Wright, Chet Howell, Harold Barrows, Eugene Maier, George M. Penny, Edson J. Driscoll, Clinton W. Shuford, Jane Thomas, Bill Sloan, Lyle Chappell, Jimmy O'Conner, Helen Varnell, James F. Stutzman, Sam Wong, Lois Engford, Nellie Dutton Bausman, Carl D. Clancy, Bob Good, Ezra H. Foster, Allen Odle, Edward S. Webb, Ray Wren, Harry Cooke, Walter Jennier, William F. Wilcox, Beatrice M. Jarmas, Jack Mills, Delisle Chappel, Cecil Roberts, Eliza Jane Banks Thomas, Charles Hildera, Herman Vanderureg, Nellie Schrader, Kennedy John Swain, Steve Raborn, Robert Raborn, E. R. Gary, Don Rey, Georgi and Betty Kristov, Nikolai Poliakov, William Thompson, Sr., Maria Zoppe, Frank C. Fisher, Arthur Converse, Jack Hart, George Griffin, Rose Steele, Felicia J. Behee, Albert White, Alphonse Fournier, William O. Harris, Jr., Fanny E. Newcomb, William R. Timmerman, William Sullivan, Val Hansen, Hans Kondziele and Brenda Allers.

Our thanks to dozens of fans and circus owners who helped to provide the information and details of this article.



100 YEARS OF CIRCUS POSTERS,
by Jack Rennert, Avon Books, Hearst
Corp., publisher. Price \$8.95.

Here comes a giant book (16 x 11") of circus posters that should capture the fancy of every collector of circus lore. The author has previously published "The Poster Art of Tomi Ungerer" and "100 Years of Bicycle Posters." His circus book is in the same format as the others, a few pages of text referenced to each of the posters shown on the 112 pages. The solid 13 pages of text includes extensive information on the show, the printing house and sometimes the artist.

CHS members contributed greatly in sharing their litho collections. Bob Parkinson provided information and posters from the giant collection of the Circus World Museum, Harold Dunn's collection of lithographs, without doubt the largest and finest private collection in the world, supplied posters as did John Lentz, also of Sarasota, Florida. John Hurdle, of the Ringling Museum of the Circus and C. P. Fox, of Ringling Barnum's Circus World, are also credited. Other material came from the Museum of the City of New York and the Library of Congress.

The highlight of the book by way of new material is two exceptional Barnum & Bailey one sheets designed in 1901 by A. Edel, a French artist, and printed by the Paul Dupont firm in Paris. The author comments that the French artist used an art style with remarkable similarity to the treatment of pagentry in the Strobridge bills that were shipped to the show in Europe from the company's Cincinnati plant.

The artists of some American bills are identified, however many of the foreign lithograph artists are singled out, indicating that the records of artists in Europe were much more available than in the U. S.

A mini-history of the Strobridge, Courier, Erie and Enquirer litho firms is intertwined throughout the descriptions of each of the posters reproduced. Most of the illustrations are in full color, many covering a full page.

Conspicuous by their absence are the wonderful posters produced by the Russell-Morgan, Donaldson, National and Ackermann-Quigley lithograph firms.

Many truly beautiful foreign circus lithos are reproduced, ranging from mod-



art Swiss bills of the Knie show and the W. H. Wilkie's circus in South Africa to the more traditional Cirque D'Hiver show in Paris. Another D'Hiver bill of 1871 is most interesting. The earliest American bill is an 1870 Howes & Cushings Great United States Circus poster, this one is from the Dunn collection.

There is much circus history worked into the description of the posters, all rather accurate as far as we could see.

The European bills should be of interest to American circus fans, mainly due to the lack of previous exposure. Lacking in this area are the Italian circus posters of recent years, perhaps some of the finest ever used by the circuses.

The book is generally available in book stores and we think you will like it.

Fred D. Pfening, Jr.

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN, By
Zander Hollander, Hawthorn Books,
Publisher.

A book called "Madison Square Garden" ought to be of prime interest for both circus and arena lore—certainly there is a place for a good Garden history—but the one published recently doesn't fill this particular bill.

It's about sports in the Garden, not really so much about the Garden itself. Each chapter is about a different sport and by a different sports writer. Ordinarily, that would be okay—not a book for circus and arena people, but a logical thing to publish. But this purports to write about the Garden as such and about its four buildings, and it misses. In fact, it starts to look a little ludicrous. Can you imagine a Garden book that can't distinguish between John Ringling and John Ringling North?

It is a little hard to understand a book on the Garden that mentions neither W. C. Coup nor James A. Bailey and not even John Ringling. It speaks about Jimmy Walker being at ringside with John Ringling North for a Jack Dempsey fight in the 1920's—before Uncle John would have let his nephew out with the big folks.

The book mentions Jo-Jo the Dog Faced Boy, but it isn't referring to the original Barnum brought; instead, this one is a six-day bike rider. It mentions a Beatty, but it is a Jim, not Clyde, and there is no word about the Wallendas, Concellos, Cristianis, or Zacchinis. It speaks of Jenny Lind, who predates all four Gardens, as if Barnum brought her there in about 1890. It settles for some tired Keltys photos of sideshow people and Gargantua, when the Garden of all places should produce good circus pictures. It tries to cover a lot of circus ground with one picture it calls a high wire act and which isn't.

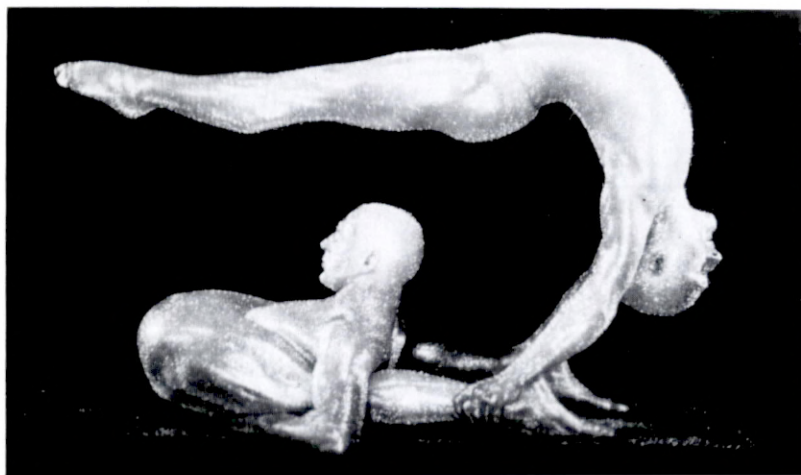
While it mentions Buffalo Bill's being there, it leaves you with the idea it might have been for a one-night stand. And of course, there is no reference to Spangles, 101 Ranch Wild West, or Forepaugh-Sells. The book includes the name of Joe Basile for the time he was bandmaster for dance marathons, but it doesn't say anything about Merle Evans and roughly 2,000 performances he played there.

It is woefully short in coverage of Ice Capades, Hollywood Ice Review, Holiday on Ice and Ice Follies. It is too skimpy regarding the Garden's great role in rock concerts, political rallies, and spectacular shows. It just isn't enough to gloss over it all with a handful of photos. The book believes that "only boxing, horse shows and dog shows" were presented in all four Gardens, which doesn't

check out with circus history and the band business. One just shouldn't bill this as a Garden history unless it has chapters for several kinds of shows as it does for several kinds of sports.

The one thing going for this volume from the unsports viewpoint is its coverage about the role an insurance company played in Garden history. Except for that, the book has little or no value to circus, arena and show business historians. Better we should just go back and re-read Bob Loeffler's excellent series in recent issues of *The Bandwagon*. Even if he doesn't mention sports.

Tom Parkinson



CONTORTIONISTS, By Michel Poignant, Europa Verlag, publisher, D-56 Wuppertal 2, Postfach 20 18 15, West Germany.

Michel Poignant, a resident of Paris, France, has been one of Europe's most avid contortionists fans and collectors of photos of people perfecting the art. For nearly 10 years he has been in the process of publishing a book on this special type of presentation. Late in 1974 the book appeared, and I received my copy after having made payment on it many years ago.

The preface is printed in both French and English. In it the author says, "I interviewed dozens of contortionists on their professional development. All of them told me that they had begun to exercise themselves while very young-but that decision did not rest with them-that their apprenticeship had caused them no suffering and that they experienced some difficulties only from the time they had undertaken to put on an act."

The author says in professional terms one is called a "bender" or a "posturer" and one could not be anything more, unless he practices the dislocation of the shoulder.

The "benders" achieve their exercises by reversing themselves backwards, the "posturers" by leaning forward and keeping their legs straight or by folding them at the back of the neck. It appears that it is rare that a single artist can be

both a forward and a backward contortionist at the same time. Poignant says three words express the beauty which is real of the contortionist: suppleness, harmony and balance.

Other than the preface the book is entirely photos. It is divided into chapters, each covering a country. It would appear that more women than men go into the field, perhaps due to an outgrowth to acrobatic dancing lessons at an early age. Many pictured in the book are night club performers and a number of these are part of an acrobatic act consisting of a man and a woman.

A number of the acts from Germany

appear in gold paint. One of these acts shown in three different photos is the Leo Spurgat group of four people, two men and two women. This act was brought to the United States in the early 1930's by Pat Valdo for the Ringling-Barnum circus, and it was featured in the "gold statue" acts on the big show. Leo Spurgat was himself an excellent contortionist.

Many of the older photos show men in fish or serpent costumes, this type of act was very popular with American circuses over the years.

There are also many pictures of children in unbelievable contorted positions. Overall it contributes historical reference to yet another vertical phase of circus performing.

Fred D. Pfening, Jr.

SHOW FREAKS & MONSTERS, By Hans Scheugl and Felix Adanos, Verlag M. DuMont Schauberg, Breite Strasse 70, Köln, West Germany.

Here we find yet another book, printed in German, covering a special part of circus history, illustrated with 307 photographs of unusual people from all over the world.

Felix Adanos, one of the world's greatest living jugglers, appeared with the Ringling-Barnum Circus in the 1950's. While in Vienna a few years ago I visited Mr. Adanos at his home and he showed

his collection of photos of freaks and told how the subject of human oddities had been his hobby for many years.

The chapters cover various types of freaks, midgets, fat people, giants, siamese twins, multi-limbed people and tattooed folks, plus about every other abnormality one can think of that may have appeared in public.

Some of the illustrations go back to the 1700's and are rare collectors items. There are twelve full color reproductions of lithographs, including side show bills from Barnum & Bailey and Al G. Barnes Circuses. Many freaks well known in American circus history are pictured like Lionel, the lion faced man, Precilla Bigano, the alligator lady, Frieda Puschnik, an armless and legless lady, The Doll family of midgets, Eko and Iko and Zip, the original what is it. A large number of strange people who have appeared in Europe are of course pictured.

This is easily the most extensive book ever published, certainly the best illustrated.

Fred D. Pfening, Jr.



MICHAEL KARA, KING OF JUGGLERS, By Herman Sagemuller, Published by the author.

Serious collectors of circusianna, as well as juggling and performance buffs, should note publication of an 80-page (plus cover) paperback biography, *Michael Kara; König der Jongleure, Jongleur der Könige* (King of the Jugglers, Juggler of the Kings). Published in 1973 in the German language, the book's author is Herman Sagemuller, noted West German expert on jugglers and their craft. The edition, the product of four years of work, is illustrated liberally with a total of 40 photographs, pictorials and other art. Michael Kara invented "the gentleman juggler," earning in the days before Enrico Rastelli the acclaim of audiences around the world and notoriety as "the best juggler of his time." The book is dedicated to Felix Adanos, who is considered the modern day exemplar of Kara's skill and art.

In tracing the career of Kara, the book provides substantial narrative as well as a concluding section indicating the engagements of the juggler, beginning with continental stage and circus appearances in the mid-1880's, his premiere U.

S. appearance in 1891 with the Boston Howard Athenaeum Company, and his concluding appearances in pre-Hitler Germany. In between he graced the boards of about every prominent entertainment site in the world, including the Wintergarten, Hansa Theater, Folies Bergere, B. F. Kieth Circuit and many more. A single copy of the edition can be obtained by sending a bank cheque or postal money order to: Jongleur-Archiv Herman Sagemüller, D-8860 Baldingen, West Germany, Wekhrinweg 21. A cheque or money order should be drawn in Deutschmarks (DM), in an amount of 9:20 DM for return of a copy by regular mail.


Ted Haussman

Dunn Collection To Ringling Museum

During the ground breaking ceremonies for construction of the new \$457,500. building of the Ringling Museum of the Circus, it was announced that the museum had accepted the collection of circus material from Harold Dunn, a resident of Sarasota.

In addition to the collection of lithographs, programs, heralds and route books, the Dunn Bros. miniature circus will also go to the Sarasota facility.

Since the collection is contingent upon suitable housing, the 1975-76 Ringling budget request to the State of Florida includes a \$1.6 million fixed capital outlay appropriation for Phase II of the new circus museum building to contain the Dunn material.



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SINCE 1944

ONE SHEET

By Stuart Thayer

In the 1930's and 1940's Brooklyn, New York was largely a subject of jocularly in movies, radio programs, nightclub routines and popular literature. The typical resident of the place was portrayed as a blue-collar jester who wore a cap and talked in a pathos that was supposedly endemic to the borough. Movies concerning World War II monotonously characterized by generic types—the farm boy, the southerner, the cowboy—always included either a Jew or a Brooklynite, and probably both at some reach, as typifying metropolitan man. Such treatment of Brooklyn and its inhabitants rose from its being in the shadow of Manhattan, at that time the essence of metropolitan sophistication since Paris was occupied, London in ruins and Rome the enemy. The citizen of Brooklyn was the country cousin of the Manhattanite, his open, flat city lacking the towers, the power and the glamour of the city across the river.

Since its function has been largely one of being a bedroom for Manhattan there is little to interest the historian of great events in Brooklyn. Preservationists on the other hand find it a fertile field for the conservation of architectural material. The Brooklyn Navy Yard is probably the most important link between the borough and the nation's history. Many famous ships were built there.

The circus historian finds some interesting information in the popular history of the place. The original Breuckelen (Dutch for Broken Land) was settled in 1636 and was named after a village in the Netherlands. It achieved a municipal government in 1646, four years before New York did. For a long time it was but one of six towns that are now combined—Bushwick, Flatlands, Flatbush, New Utrecht and Gravesend being the others. Williamsburgh was added in 1854. In 1816 Brooklyn was incorporated as a city with a population of about six thousand. In 1823 it saw its first circus.

At this time the village edge was near the present site of Borough Hall and the main street was Fulton Street (then Old Ferry Road) which began at the Fulton Ferry dock of a later period. In the block to the north of Borough Hall, between present day Fulton and Adams Street, a Mr. Green in 1810 opened the Military Garden. This was one of the Vauxhall-type entertainment places that were so popular in the United States in the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. Before the time of public parks these were a sort of middle class meeting place, being planted and fountained and presenting amusements and refreshments. Similar ones were in New York City—Richmond Hill Gardens—and Philadelphia—Columbia Gardens—and Charleston—Vauxhall Gardens. Hall shows were the usual fare of these places, but occasionally circuses were presented. To the one in Brooklyn John Rogers brought the first circus troupe to appear in that city.

Rogers had come to America from England with James West's troupe in 1816. His son, Charles J., was born in 1817, a child destined to eclipse the career of his father as well as those of most people in the business. He is the one who became in the 1840's the partner of George Spalding in the long-lived firm of Spalding and Rogers.

Rogers, senior, was a rider with some talent, apparently, but appears most often in American programs as the riding master, today's ringmaster. West sold his horses and his leases—in those days the equivalent of selling a show—to Price and Simpson, the theatrical impresarios, in September, 1822. Rogers stayed on until mid-1823 and then joined William Blanchard's troupe. Blanchard closed in Hoboken, New Jersey, on August 8, 1823 and at this point Rogers formed his own troupe for the appearance at Military Garden.

With him were his twelve-year old apprentice, Master Hunt; Mr. Carnes, a clown; Mr. Daniel Champlin, a wire-walker. They played until September 5 and then moved over to New York. The 74 Long Island Star, according to G.C.D. Odell, confirmed that it was the first exhibition of the kind ever offered in Brooklyn.

It was five years before another circus appeared there. In 1828 the company from the Lafayette Amphitheatre at Fifth and Canal

in New York made a one-month stand at the Brooklyn Amphitheatre. This hall was located somewhere on Fulton Street and this was its only use as a circus, prompting us to suppose that the name was temporary which explains why we can't locate it exactly. The Lafayette company was a sub-troupe and had in it John Richer, Master LaForest, John S. Whitaker and Master Alexander with the trick horse Napoleon. They played from July 17 to August 14 and then joined the main troupe in Providence. The amphitheatre was converted into a theatre on September 4.

After another lapse of time, this one nine years, the American Arena Company played at Military Garden in 1837. Thomas Tufts was the manager of the troupe and we know little more about it at this time. They advertised themselves as being from the Front Street Amphitheatre in Baltimore.

On July 10, 1839 Welch and Bartlett brought their Grand National Arena Company into Brooklyn, presumably to a lot next to the Military Garden as John Glenroy says their show was set up where the City (read Borough) Hall now stands. This was the former Bacon and Derious Circus which Welch and Bartlett had purchased in Fredericksburg, Virginia July 4. From Brooklyn they took ship to Providence.

This became a common thing for circuses to do—play New York, then Brooklyn, then sail to Boston or Providence to begin a tour of New England. In time they would go New York to Brooklyn to the Mott Haven Yards of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad in the Bronx to begin the rail season.

In 1840 Welch and Bartlett returned, this time to play in Military Garden. They came from 509 Broadway in Manhattan and again went on to Providence. By this time Brooklyn had become a city, was twenty-five miles in area and had a population of 42,622. Its size alone was enough to attract shows, Manhattan's proximity notwithstanding. From this time circuses appeared with some regularity and subsequent dates were as follows:

- 1841-June, Titus and Angevine, June 1 to 3.
- 1842-Aaron Turner, April 11 and 12.
- June, Titus and Angevine, October 3 to 9.
- 1843-Welch and Mann, July 6.
- 1846-Rockwell and Stone, beginning May 18 at the Brooklyn Garden, new name for Military Garden.
- 1847-Raymond and Waring, April 27 to 29.
- Sands, Lent and Company, October 29 to November 3.
- 1848-(J.O.) Howes and Company, March 27 to April 8.
- Sands and Lent, October 26 to 28.
- Van Amburgh and Company, November 15 to 18.
- 1851-Raymond and Driesbach, May 6 to 8 (Williamsburgh 9).
- Barnum's Caravan, May 29 and 30.
- (Williamsburgh 31).
- 1852-Welch's National, May 22 to 24.
- Robinson and Eldred, June 7 and 8.
- Madigan and Stone, October 4.
- 1854-Spalding and Rogers, September 8 and 9, thus completing a cycle started by Rogers, Senior in 1823.
- Barnum's Caravan, October 20.
- 1855-Sands, Nathans and Company, April 19 to 21.
- Dan Rice, September 5 and 6.
- S. B. Howes, October 27.
- 1856-Jim Myers, April 21 to 23.
- Dan Rice, August 20 and 21.
- 1857-Sloat and Shepherd, September 7 and 8.
- Dan Rice, September 24 to 26.
- 1858-Sands and Nathans, April 12.
- Tournaire and Whitby, May 17 and 18.
- 1859-Joe Pentland, May 25 and 26.
- L. B. Lent, September 12 and 13.
- 1860-J. M. Nixon, May 28.
- L. B. Lent, October 9 and 10.
- Levi J. North, October 19.
- 1861-Spalding and Rogers, April 22 to 24.
- J. M. Nixon, August 19.
- L. B. Lent, October 11 and 12.
- 1862-J. M. Nixon, April 21 to 23.
- Hippozoonomadon (L.B. Lent), April 28.



Fifty-five clowns appear in this 1934 Kelty view of the Ringling-Barnum clown alley. Some of the better known men in this photo are Tad Tosky, Felix Adler, Lawrence Anderson, Paul "Chesty" Mortier, Toby Tyler, Jimmy Davidson, Jack Le Claire, Harry Rittley, Louis Jacobs, Herman Joseph, Jerry Bangs, Charlie Bell, Frank McStay, Everett and Tom Hart, John Nelson, Paul Horompo, Frankie Saluto, Prince Paul, Paul Jerome, Paul Wenzel, Frederico Canestrelli and Buck Baker. Of these only Lou Jacobs is still with the big one. Pfening Collection.